



September 16, 2019

BUILDING CONNECTIONS
Hodges Square Village
NEW LONDON CT

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THAMES RIVER INNOVATION PLACE



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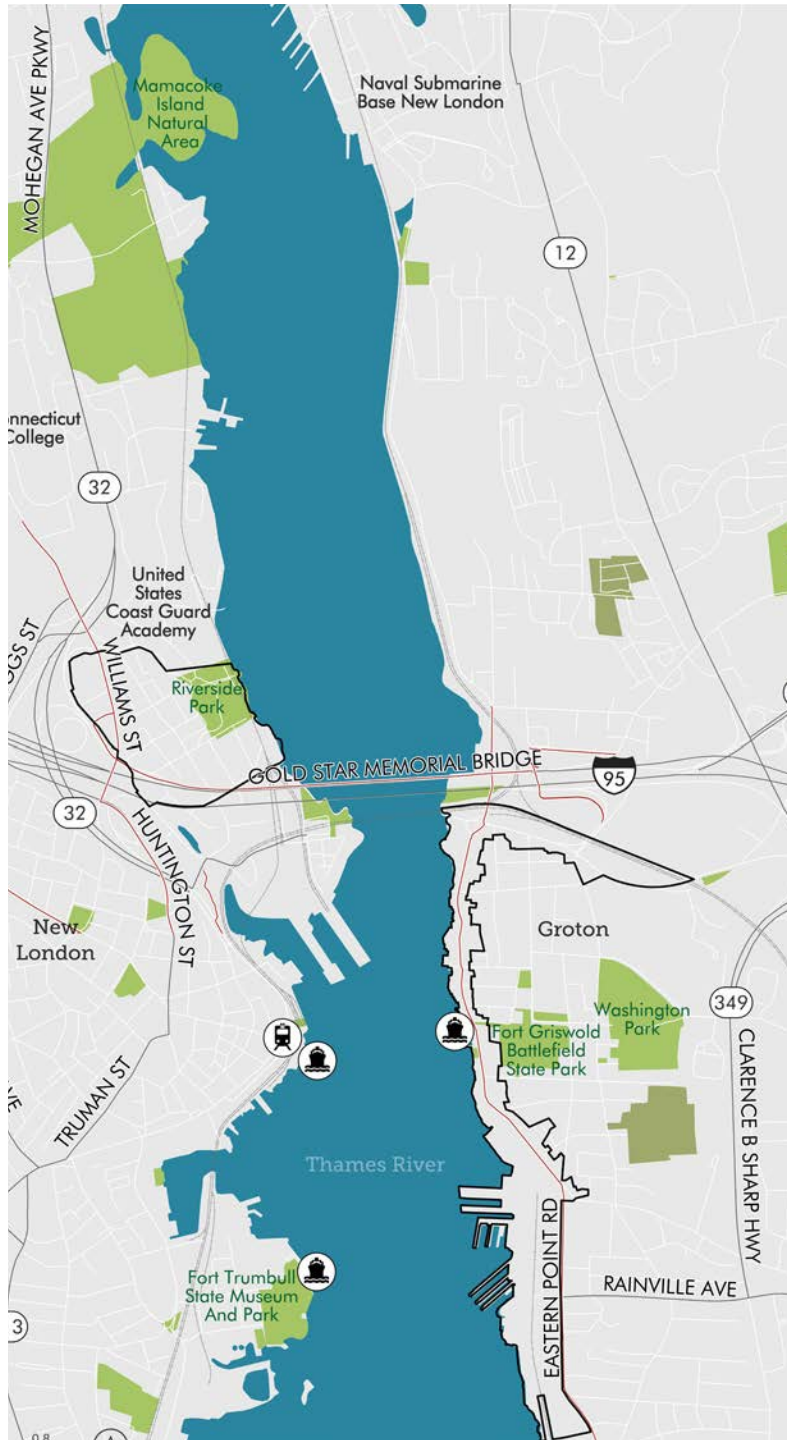
Executive Summary

Purpose

In the Fall of 2018, the Cities of Groton, CT and New London, CT - under the umbrella of the Thames River Innovation Places - hired Ninigret Partners (NP) to prepare a redevelopment analysis and plan for two study areas: the Thames Street/Bridge Street area of Groton and the Hodges Square neighborhood in New London. Ninigret Partners was selected via a rigorous RFP process, out of a pool of 10 respondents. The original RFP can be found in the appendix of this document.

Although the Thames Street Promenade and Hodges Square Neighborhood are linked by their proximity to each other and the Thames River multi-use path, the challenges facing each community are unique.

The goal of this study was to produce a high-level, policy-oriented document that would guide future action in the two study areas, while reserving some of the funding for the implementation of select near-term recommendations. The plans would provide conceptual-level strategies for strengthening the sense of place and vitality of each area, and would outline real estate and physical improvement recommendations that would serve as a guide for future investment in the two communities. To that end, this plan has identified several strategies that have low barriers to entry - meaning they can be acted upon quickly, with low cost and relative ease. However, many of these strategies will require more in-depth study to understand exactly how they might be implemented.

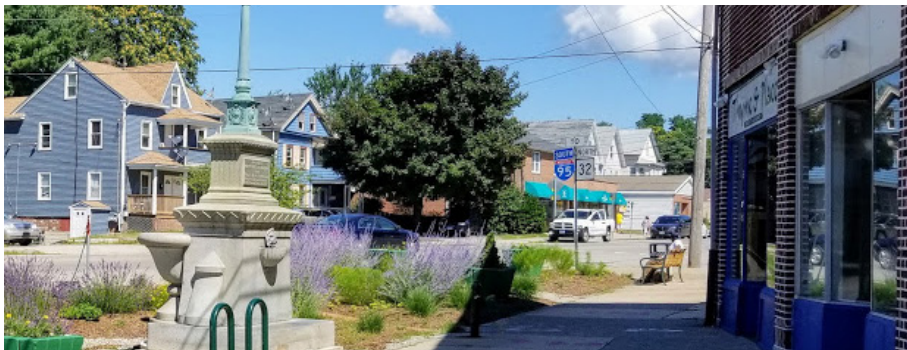


Study Area

Hodges Square is a historic New London neighborhood, situated just south of Connecticut College and the Coast Guard Academy. It is bounded on the west and north by I-95 and its associated on/off ramps, and on the east by the Thames River. Hodges Square is a stable residential neighborhood with unique assets such as Riverside Park, the Old Mill and the Gold Star bike path over the Thames River to Groton. Business are concentrated along Williams Street, which is the main arterial, running north-south and connecting Hodges Square to the rest of New London. The opportunity exists to better connect across the neighborhood and to downtown New London, the US Coast Guard Academy, and Connecticut College.

The Hodges Square Village Study Area includes all the parcels bounded by the Connecticut College campus to the north, the Thames River to the east, the I-95 ramps to the west. Mill Street, Winthrop Street and Lewis Street make up the southern border of the study area.





Assets

The Hodges Square Village Study Area has many assets that make it a desirable location for future community investment:

- Proximity to the Thames River, providing ample opportunities for access to and views of the waterfront.
- Riverside Park provides a large green space that could be utilized for community events.
- Multiple historic structures give the area a quintessentially quaint New England feel. Additionally, the area has several historically significant assets including the Old Mill.
- A handful of existing local business provide the bones needed to build a vibrant future commercial corridor.
- Proximity to downtown New London.
- Multiple underutilized properties provide opportunities for future development.

The recommendations and strategies found in this report focus largely on enhancing, protecting and promoting these existing assets in order to strengthen the character and vibrancy of Hodges Square.

Methodology

The NP team and Thames River Innovation Places used an iterative process to develop this plan, collecting primary and secondary research through a variety of means, interviewing stakeholders, holding a open-house public workshop and conducting an online survey. The NP team conducted primary research by visiting the study areas to observe the physical conditions and characteristics, and performed a parcel-by-parcel survey of each area to confirm City-provided GIS data on land use, occupancy and ownership.

NP conducted interviews with key stakeholders from the community, in order to understand what the community's priorities were and what they perceived the major issues to be. Interviewees included local officials, business and property owners and community members.

The primary research was then supplemented with secondary research, as the team reviewed census data, real estate market data, QCEW data, LAUS data, FEMA data and NOAA data on existing conditions in each city. Population projections were also reviewed. This research provided contextual understanding of how the study areas compared with their larger communities.

Finally, an open house-style public workshop and online survey were conducted, providing feedback from the larger community on their priorities and concerns.



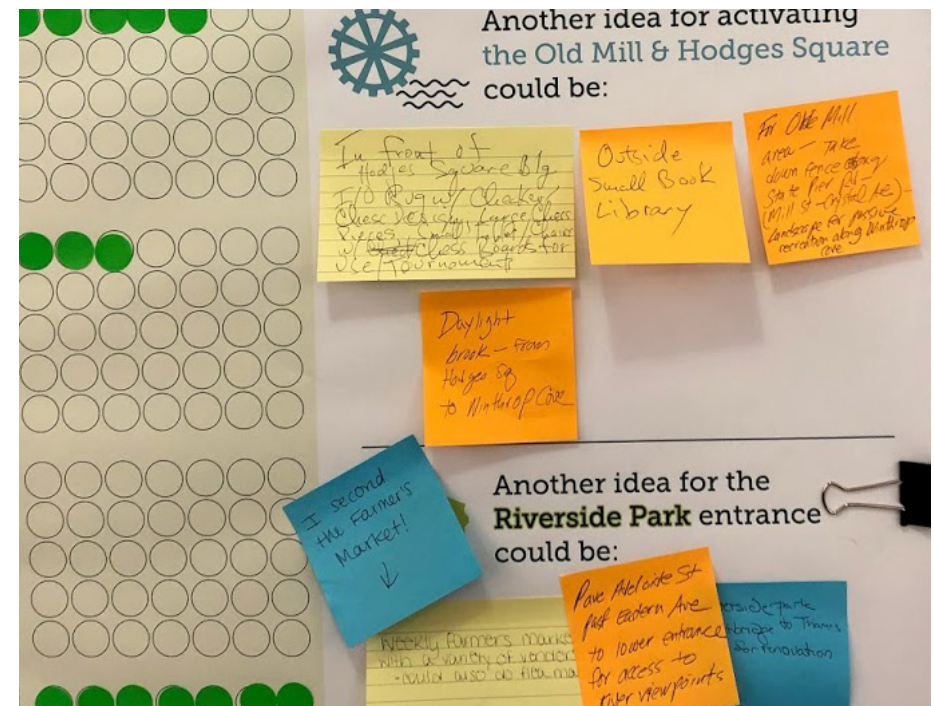
Key Findings

The primary and secondary research elicited several key findings regarding what is happening in the study area, as well as in the larger context of New London:

- 1 The Hodges Square neighborhood is mainly residential, and although stable, may change in the near future.
- 2 The Hodges Square neighborhood is technically walkable but topography and infrastructure make it difficult to connect destinations.
- 3 Hodges Square needs to improve its curb appeal.
- 4 Market conditions make new commercial development difficult.
- 5 For residential development, market conditions are improving.

Additionally, findings from the stakeholder input indicated the following top three priorities:

- A Hodges Square Plaza Activation
- B Highway Underpass Public Art/Wayfinding
- C Hodges Square/Old Mill/Riverside Park Connection



2013 Creative Placemaking Plan

The Creative Placemaking Pilot Program was created in 2013 by New London Landmarks and the City of New London's Office of Development and Planning (ODP) through a grant from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and the Office of the Arts. Because of the work the community did, and the many good ideas contained in the 2013 Creative Placemaking Plan, it has become the jumping off point for many of the recommendations in this plan. Among other things, the plan prioritized action items for Williams Street (From Huntington Street to Mohegan Avenue) and Hodges Square:



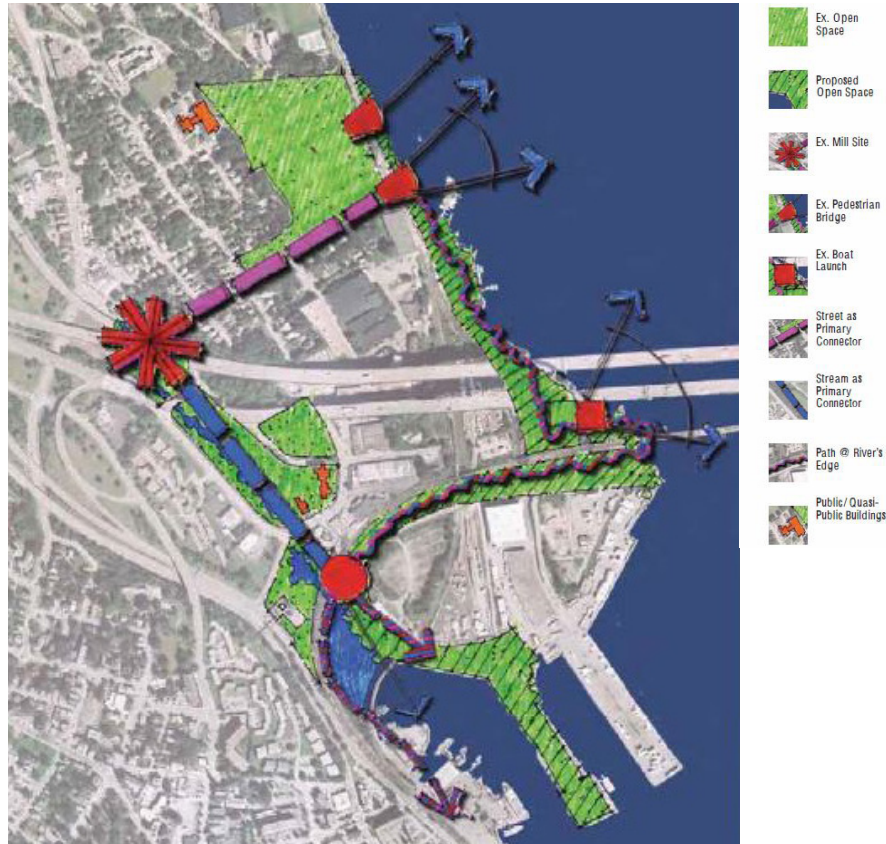
Williams Street (From Huntington Street to Mohegan Avenue)

- Stripe bike lanes, sharrows and/or appropriate signage/striping
- Replace crosswalks with high visibility surfacing
- Implement landscape improvements (street trees)
- Reconfigure exit ramp to a 4-way intersection with Crystal Avenue if possible.
- Install picket fences along residential frontages
- Install pedestrian scale sidewalk light posts
- Install trash/ recycling containers
- Install planter boxes
- Install bike racks
- Install benches
- Install wayfinding signage

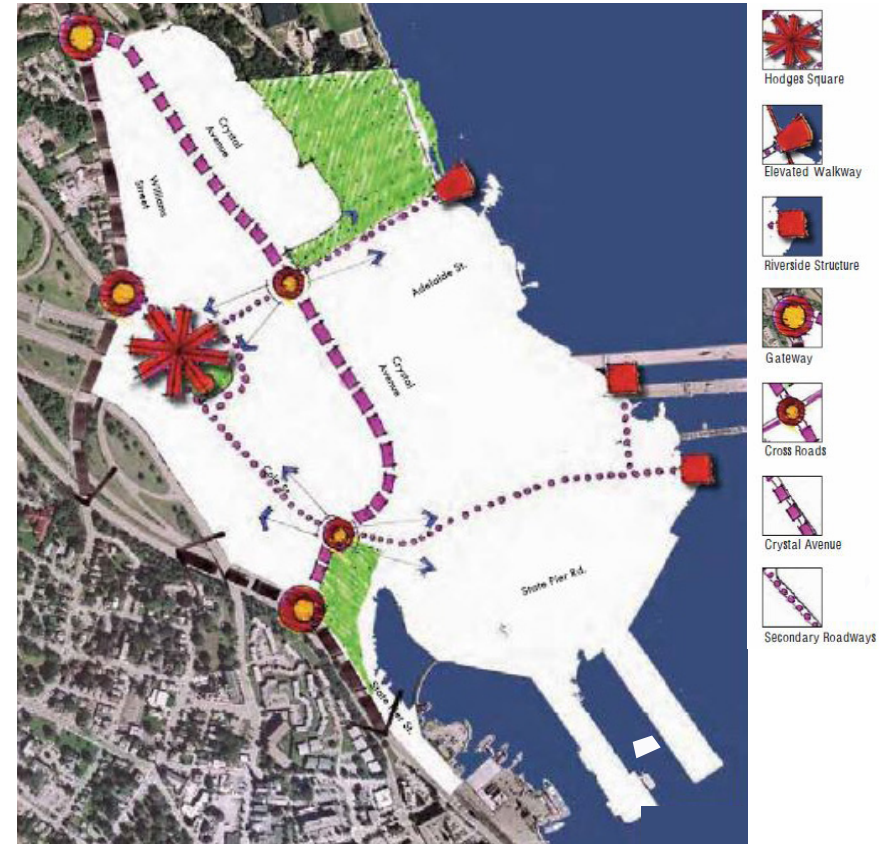
Hodges Square

- Enlarge sidewalks along commercial frontage
- Re-align Williams /State Pier Intersection
- Implement a façade improvement program
- Implement "Fountain Plaza"
- Stripe bike lanes, sharrows and / or appropriate signage/striping
- Replace crosswalks with high visibility surfacing
- Install picket fences along residential frontages
- Install pedestrian scale sidewalk light posts
- Install trash/ recycling containers
- Install planter boxes
- Install bike racks
- Install benches
- Install wayfinding signage

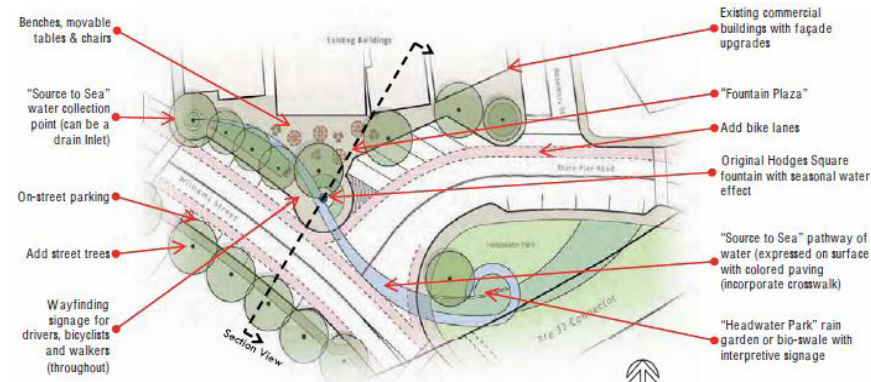
2013 Creative Placemaking Plan (cont.)



Proposed Open Space, Events & Opportunities



Proposed Wayfinding & Street System Map



Proposed Plan & Cross-Sections for Williams Street.



Rendering for Williams Street. (Illustrative view only)

Strategies

Using the 2013 Creative Place-making Plan as the starting point, the strategies are focused primarily on sending signals to the market, local property owners and residents about a changing dynamic in Hodges Square. The use of physical improvements that send visual cues of change and positive momentum is an important component of providing confidence that Hodges Square is an area worthy of investment.

Moreover because the neighborhood is somewhat isolated, increasing the “curb appeal” is an important component of drawing additional visitors to stop and spend money in the neighborhood. Without outside spending, sustaining restaurant or retail activity will be very difficult making new development or reinvestment in existing properties difficult to justify.

Therefore, given the curb appeal challenges, coupled with the present market conditions, it is important to focus initially on low cost but visually impactful interventions.

- 1** Activate Hodges Square through a series of low-cost actions, and temporary interventions to enhance the vibrancy and help prove the market.
- 2** Implement Williams Street placemaking plans with some small adjustments.
- 3** Enhance the I-95 underpass to improve the pedestrian and biking experience.
- 4** Connect Hodges Square, the Old Mill and Riverside Park through signage and gateway development.
- 5** Encourage use of existing City programs such as the Facade Improvement Program by making Hodges Square eligible.



Hodges Square Revitalization

- Potential Areas for Future Redevelopment
- Focus Areas for Placemaking Interventions
- ▨ Focus Area for Commercial Core
- ▨ Underutilized space
- ↔ Connections

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- 1** Better connection between Hodges Square, Old Mill and Riverside Park along Adelaide, Cole and State Pier
- 2** Enhanced Riverside Park entrance at Adelaide
- 3** Plaza/public space and activation at Hodges Square and Cole Streets
- 4** Enhanced stormwater landscaping
- 5** Public art/wayfinding along highway underpasses and embankments
- 6** Improved look and feel and infill development in commercial core
- 7** Better bike path connection between Bailey Circle and Williams Street
- 8** Williams Street improvements
- 9** Long-term: remove highway ramp
- 10** Potential State Pier Road cycletrack
- 11** Potential Gold Star Bridge connection
- 12** Potential drawbridge bicycle connection

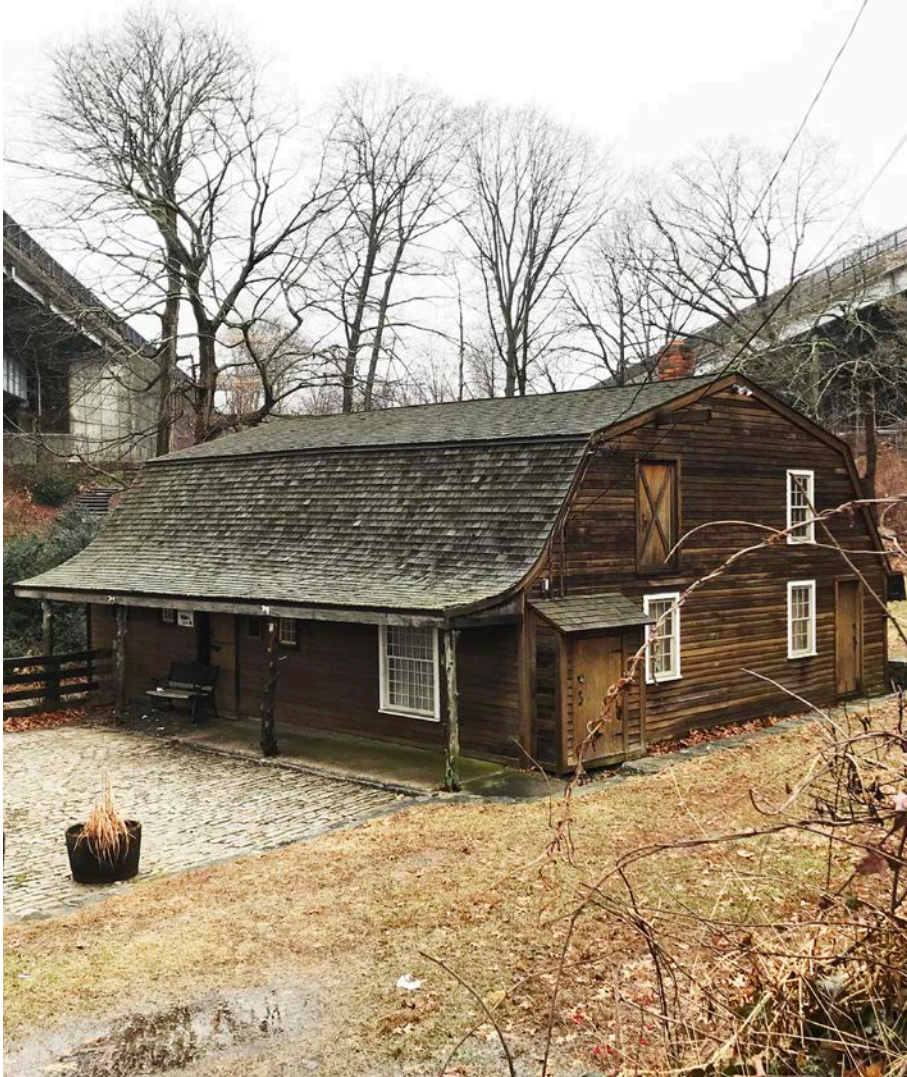


Key Findings

Overview

Hodges Square is a Connecticut Historic District overlooking the Thames River. Historically a working-class neighborhood which housed employees of nearby manufacturing operations, today it is a primarily residential neighborhood bordered by the US Coast Guard Academy and the State Port. Interstate 95 creates a “border” between Hodges Square and large portions of New London.

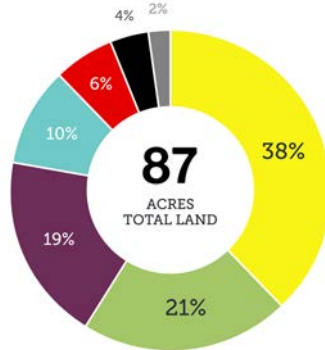
In order to understand how the area functions today, the NP team first conducted an on-the-ground assessment to observe the physical conditions and characteristics. Second, the team performed a parcel-by-parcel survey to confirm City-provided GIS data on land use, occupancy, and ownership. It used this information, in combination with secondary sources such as population, real estate, and employment data, to develop a baseline set of conditions and findings.



The Hodges Square Neighborhood is Mainly Residential, and **Although Stable, May Change in The Near Future.**

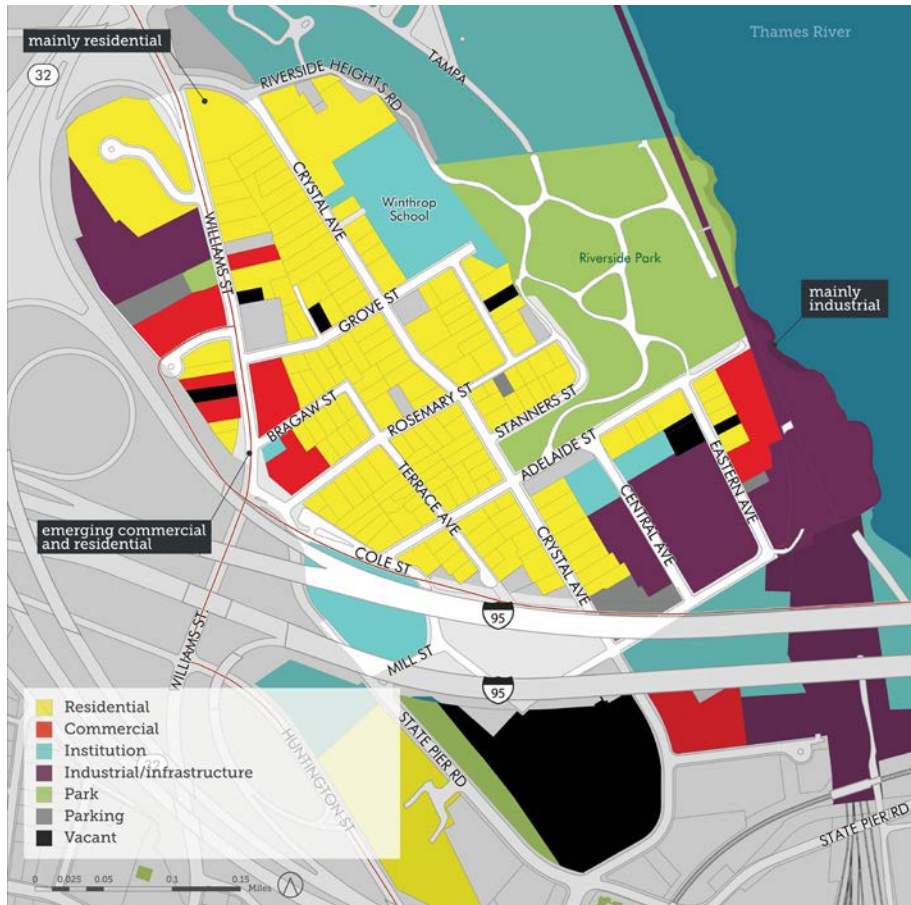
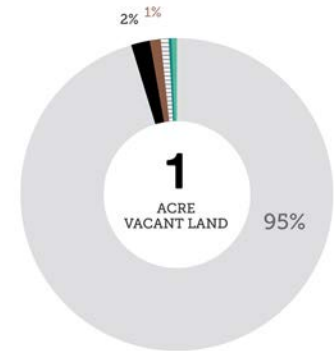
Land Use

Hodges Square is a predominantly residential neighborhood with a mixed use commercial corridor along Williams Street. Riverside Park comprises one-fifth of the total land area, and the southeastern part of the neighborhood is largely industrial.



Vacancy

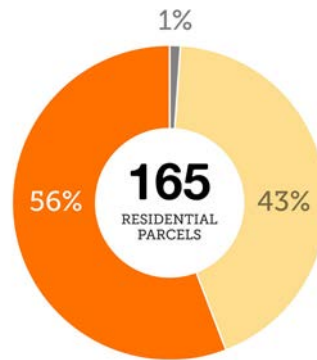
Vacancy only represents 5% of the land area. While vacancy is not a prevalent condition the locations where it does exist are in strategic, highly visible locations.



The Hodges Square Neighborhood is Mainly Residential, and **Although Stable, May Change in The Near Future. (cont.)**

Residential Status

The neighborhood is stable with a slightly higher rate of homeowner-occupied housing than renter-occupied housing. However based on age cohorts and life stage 30%-60% of the neighborhood could be in flux in the next several years.



Over time, this could significantly impact the makeup and stability of the neighborhood.

Homeowners Aged 55+



Homeowners Aged 75+



The Hodges Square Neighborhood is Technically Walkable but **Topography and Infrastructure Make it Difficult to Connect Destinations.**

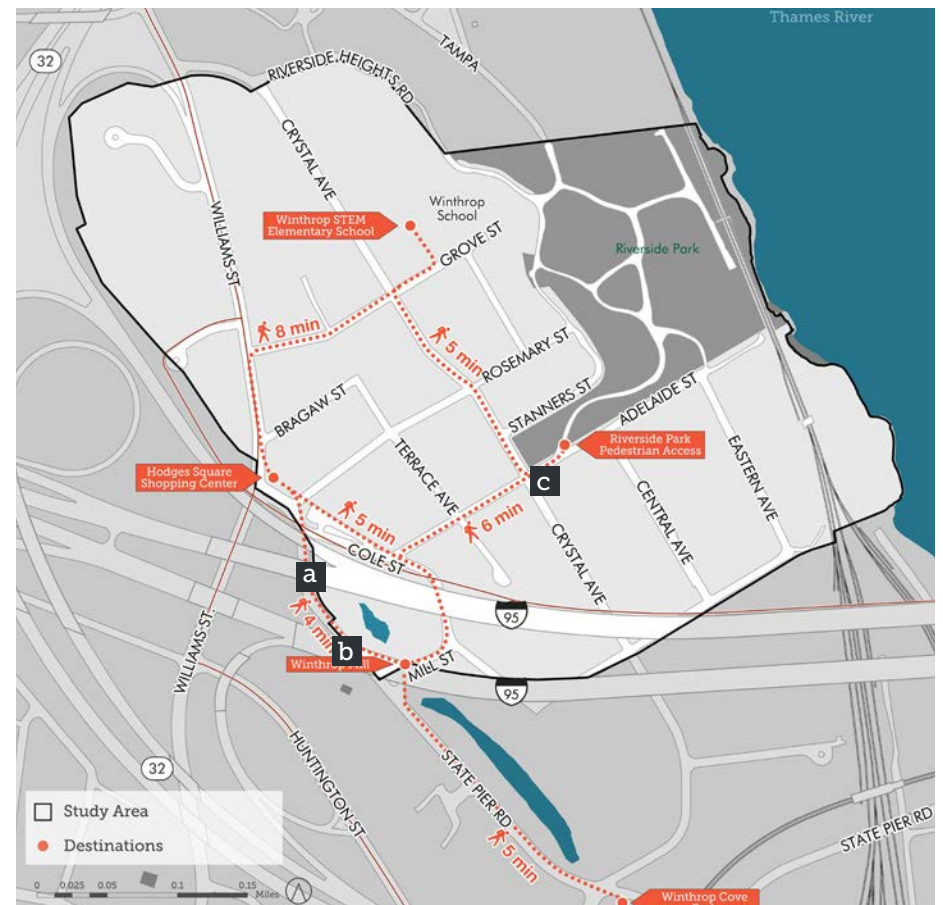
With I-95 weaving over the southern portion of Hodges Square, the hilly terrain, and lack of adequate street lighting, signage and streetscape amenities, the difficulty of navigating the neighborhood on foot is magnified by a mediocre experience.

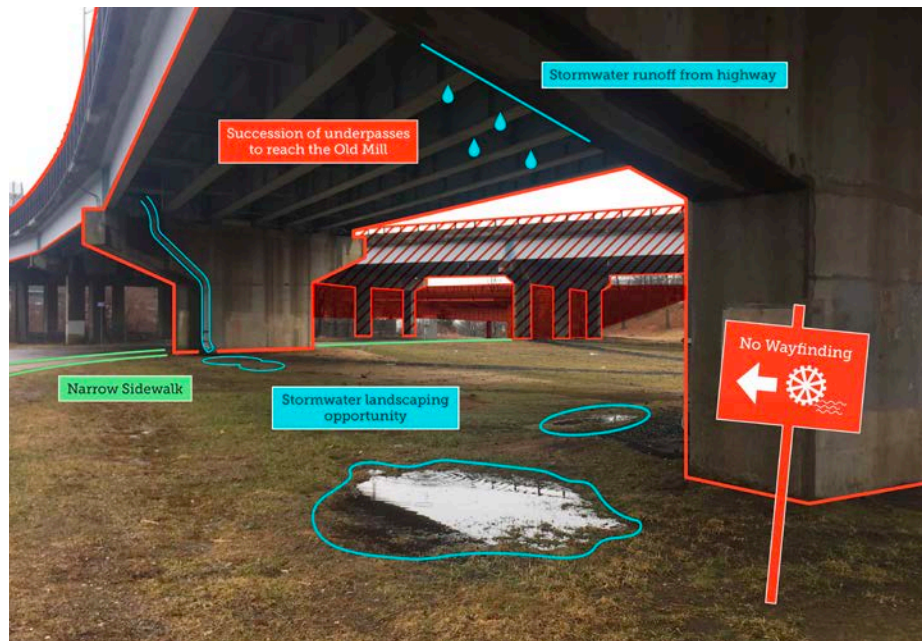
Disconnected bicycle facilities, poorly located parking stalls, and limited pedestrian accommodations discourage connectivity and can deter surrounding neighbors from visiting the Square.

Topography

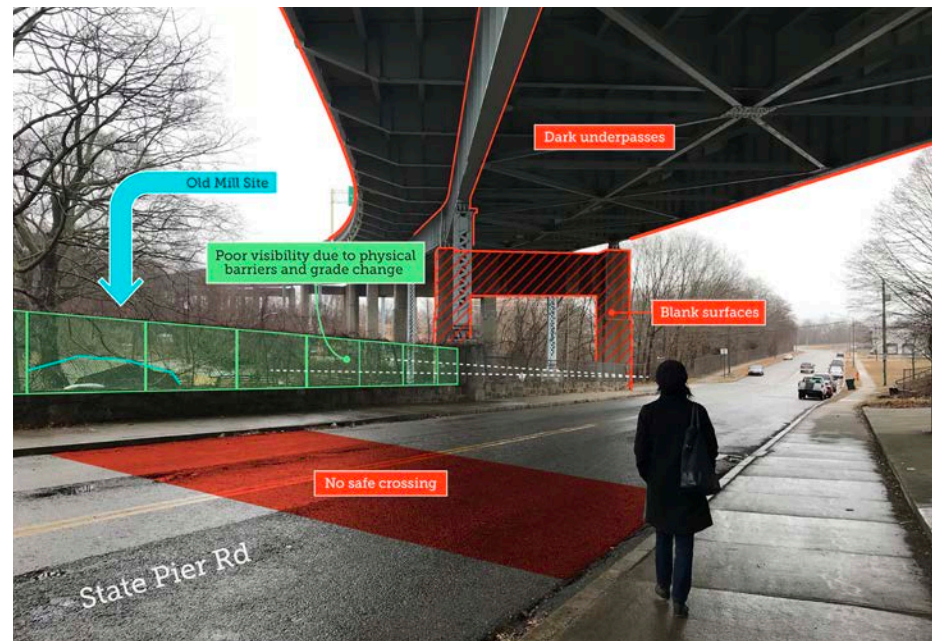


Walking Distance





a Walking on State Pier Rd



b Approaching the Old Mill



c Access to Riverside Park

Market Conditions Make New Commercial Development Difficult.

Commercial Development (February 2019 snapshot)

There is a substantial amount of commercial inventory available across New London. At the present time, it is cheaper to buy commercial property than to build property. New construction typically costs \$170/sf to \$220/sf compared to purchase prices around \$60/sf.

- Sale units available: 49
- SF range: 1,560-43,896
- Median asking price: \$292,450

Retail Development (February 2019 snapshot)

In terms of Retail Opportunity (ESRI 2018), local retail spending capacity by residents in Hodges Sq is approximately \$2.0m – \$1.5m in consumer goods and \$750k restaurant spending. There is not enough local spending to support an active retail corridor. For example, restaurant spending is less than a typical Dunkin Donuts revenue. Local businesses need a larger customer base to remain healthy.

Hodges Square Commercial Typologies



Market Conditions **Make New Commercial Development Difficult.** (cont.)

Customer Opportunities

Traffic flow plus improved public spaces that cause people to stop can help support a vibrant retail corridor.

Commuters

There are over 2,000 daily commuters into the area and the recent announcement of the Port as the Wind Power hub are opportunities.

College Students:

During NP's on-site research it became obvious that students were important contributors to supporting the local food businesses. However, the neighborhood provides little additional options to provide support the local college community.

Cyclists

With the relocation of Bike New London to the Square and the planned improvements to Williams Street, cyclists could become a contributing customer opportunity to support the businesses.

Zoning Limitations on Vibrancy and Creative Businesses

A review of the zoning for Hodges Square did not identify any major issues with FAR, parking (although the deed requirements for certain shared parking may need to be clarified) or other major zoning issues. However, certain limits on by-right uses - particularly in creative industries and potentially digital media - limits uses that may be interested in a location such as Hodges Square, but don't have the resources to go through a potentially protracted special permit exercise.

Moreover, limitations on art studios and live music reduce the potential vibrancy of the Square.

Note: Additional market information available in the appendix

Hodges Square Needs to **Improve its Curb Appeal.**



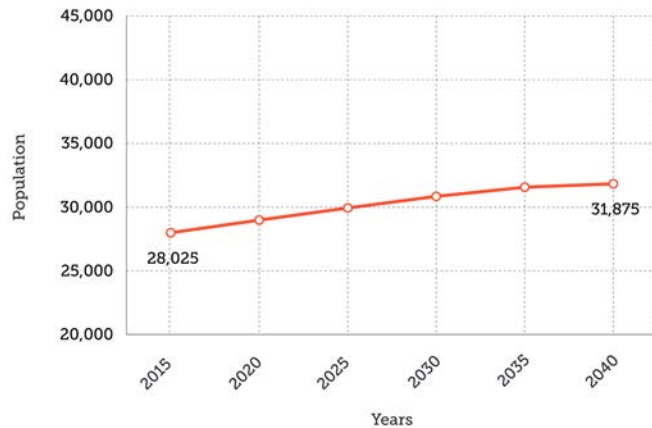
Lack of wayfinding, adequate lighting and pedestrian amenities, coupled with worn down building facades and an overabundance of pavement have overshadowed Hodges Square Village's more attractive assets. The neighborhood could benefit greatly from a face lift, in order to encourage community investment and attract new activities.



For Residential Development, Market Conditions are Improving.

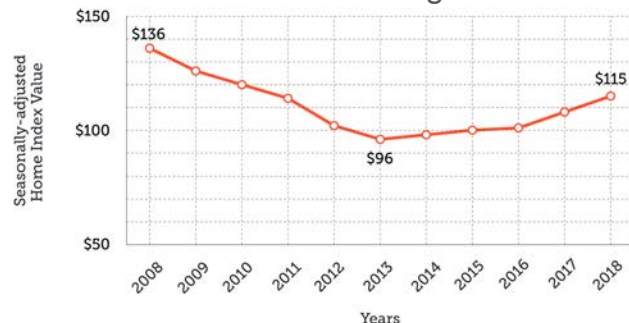
Population Dynamics

There is expected to be population growth of approximately 3,000 people by 2040. This translates to 120 people per year. The expansion of Electric Boat and the Orsted Wind Hub may accelerate population growth.



Housing Prices (February 2019 snapshot)

Single family housing prices are still 16% below 2008 recession levels but have recovered from the trough of 2013.

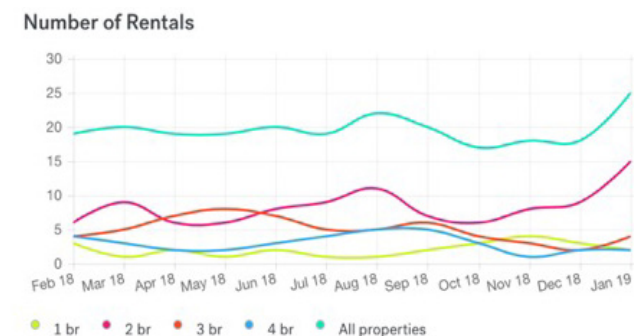


Sources: Zillow.com (sales), Trulia.com (rentals)

Residential Rental Market (February 2019 snapshot)

Apartment rental availability in New London is limited. However, market rents are well below typical thresholds of \$1.80/sqft to support development without a subsidy.

- Available units: 25
- Median rental price: \$1,225
- Average rent per sqft: \$1.33/sqft
- Per bedroom for 2-3 bedroom apartments around \$550.





Stakeholder Input

Hodges Square Village Public Outreach Process & Results

As part of the community outreach process, a public workshop was carried out on May 8th to ask New London residents, workers and key stakeholders about the future of Hodges Square and its surrounding area. The event had two objectives: first, the consultant team presented the existing conditions analysis in regards to land use, economic conditions and trends, and transportation. Then, the public was asked to weigh in on priorities for turning Hodges Square into a destination, and to improve walkability and the pedestrian experience overall.

Questions posed to attendees, as well as the existing conditions analysis, were shared with the public through an online survey, which was made available for a period of 2 weeks in May after the public workshop took place.

Overall, a total of 61 people participated in the outreach process: 20 at the workshop and 41 online. The results and findings gathered throughout this process are summarized in the following pages.

Hodges Square Village Public Outreach Results

Question 1:

We asked participants to review and pick from a list of placemaking strategies they would like to see happen on Williams Street, the Old Mill and Hodges Square, or the Riverside Park Entrance.

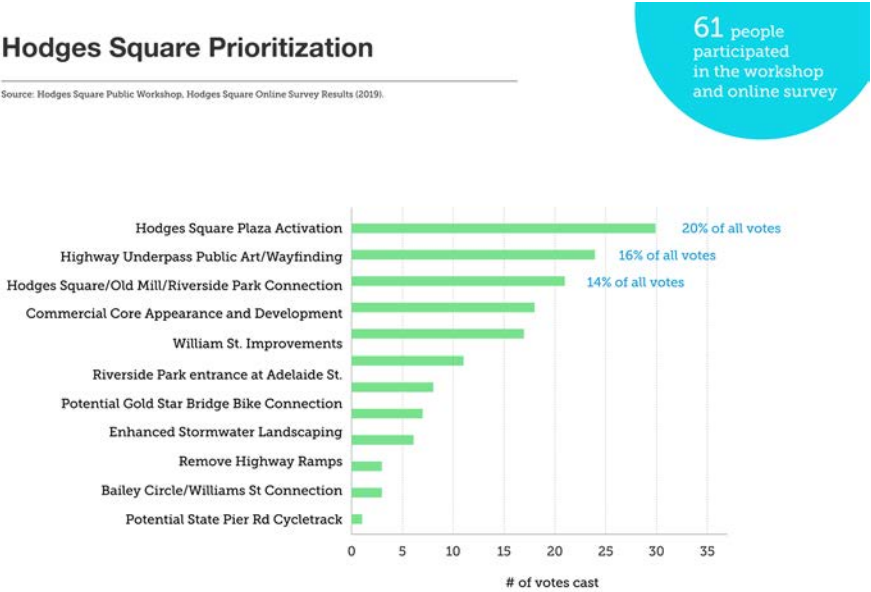
Participants could choose up to SIX OPTIONS across any of the aforementioned sites.

Question 2:

There is a wealth of efforts and initiatives that have already been undertaken in Hodges Square. We showed participants a list of ideas for Hodges Square that have high impact and are doable, and asked them to choose up to THREE OPTIONS that should be prioritized for implementation in the current plan.

Hodges Square Prioritization

Source: Hodges Square Public Workshop, Hodges Square Online Survey Results (2019).



Hodges Square Placemaking Strategies

Source: Hodges Square Public Workshop, Hodges Square Online Survey Results (2019).



For a complete inventory of written responses and comments received, please see the appendix of this report.

The map illustrates the proposed Gold Star Bike Path connection in Tampa, Florida. The route is marked with a red line and numbered 1 through 10. The path starts at the Gold Star Bike Path (yellow area) and connects to the existing Gold Star Bike Path (orange area). Key locations and streets shown include:

- Streets:** BEAR DR, HARRIET LN, BIBB DR, CRYSTAL AVE, GROVE ST, ROSEMARY ST, STANNERS ST, ADELAIDE ST, CRYSTAL AVE, CENTRAL AVE, MILL ST, STATE PIERS RD, HUNTINGTON ST, WILLIAMS ST.
- Landmarks:** United States Coast Guard Academy, Winthrop School, Riverside Park, Gold Star Bike Path connection, Gold Star Bike Path, Old Mill.
- Highways:** 32, 95, 10.
- Other Features:** Sunshine Skyway Bridge, Gulf of Mexico.

A scale bar at the bottom left indicates distances in miles (0.025, 0.05, 0.1, 0.15). A north arrow is located at the bottom center.

Using the 2013 Creative Place-making Plan as the starting point, the following recommendations are focused primarily on sending signals to the market, local property owners, and residents about a changing dynamic in Hodges Square. The use of physical improvements that send visual cues of change and positive momentum is an important first step of providing confidence that Hodges Square is an area worthy of investment.

Moreover, because the neighborhood is somewhat isolated, increasing the “curb appeal” is an important component of drawing additional visitors to stop and spend money in the neighborhood. Without outside spending, sustaining restaurant or retail activity will be very difficult making new development or reinvestment in existing properties difficult to justify.

Therefore, given the curb appeal challenges coupled with the present market conditions, it is important to focus initially on low cost but visually impactful interventions.

Activate Hodges Square Through a Series of Low Cost Actions and Temporary Interventions to Enhance the Vibrancy and Help Prove the Market

Rationale

Market conditions make it difficult to justify major reinvestment into the buildings and surrounding environment. However, smaller actions that take advantage of the existing market, the relocated Bike New London and increased activation of Riverside Park can serve a useful purpose to generate additional economic activity and prove the market



Prova Brockton

Strategies

Zoning

- Consider amending zoning for Hodges Sq to allow by right
 - Radio, television, recording studios
 - Art & craft studios
- Consider special permit for sound amplification of music and outdoor music

Temporary Uses

- Pop up program – parks, biergarten, retail
- Public art program
- Parklets
 - An interpretation is needed whether C-1 (510.2) limitations on private parks would impact the ability to do a parklet



Inner Belt Park - Akron

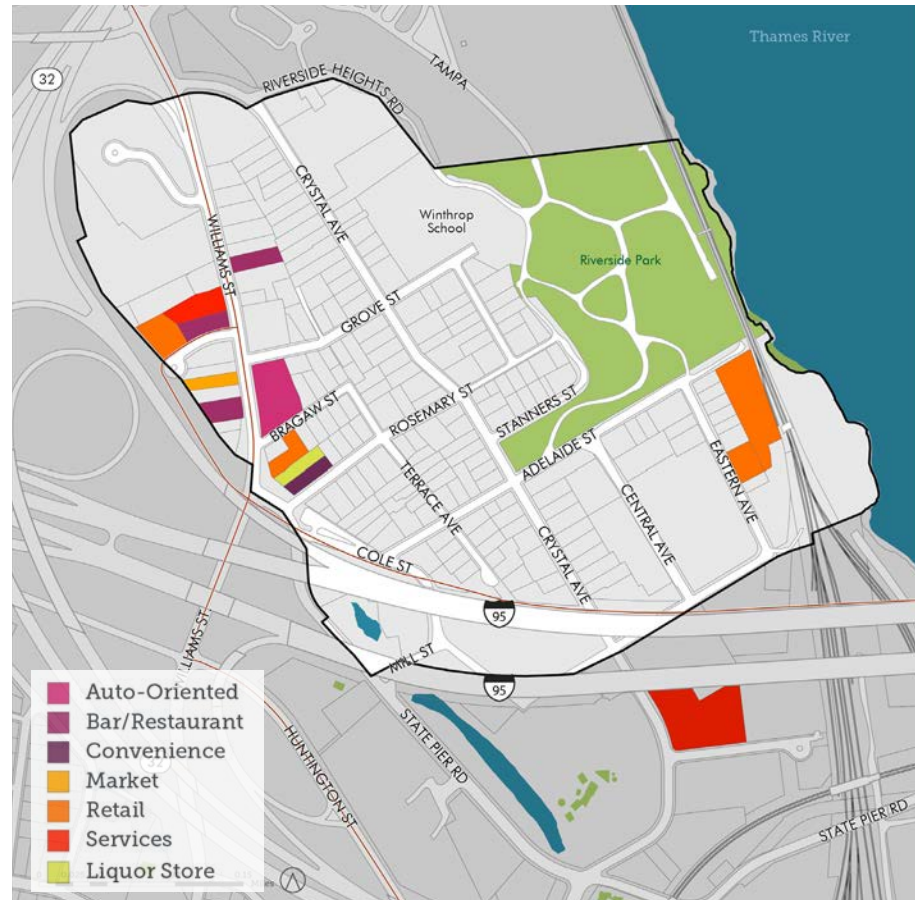
Reimagined Hodges Square to the Downtown



Implement Williams Street Placemaking Plans with Some Small Adjustments

Rationale

William St is the principal commercial corridor as well as the corridor least impacted by the topography of the area. The employment centers surrounding Hodges Sq import over 2000 workers everyday. Addressing the curb appeal and pedestrian plus bike accommodations on Williams St will be an important component of improving the experience of Hodges Square.



Strategies

The transportation team reviewed the 2017 Williams Street Traffic Control Improvement Upgrade and provided edits and gave feedback to the redesign plans, including:

- Installing gateway islands for Hodges Square which also serve to calm traffic
- Adding curb extensions, crossing islands
- Providing bicycle merge box where lanes end
- Properly aligning bike lanes
- Continuing dashed lane bike markings through intersections
- Drawing bicycle sharrows
- Adding pedestrian yield markings and signs
- Improving crosswalks to adhere to NACTO guidelines

Implement Williams Street Placemaking Plans with Some Small Adjustments (cont.)



Williams Street redesign

Future off-ramp removal can reduce through traffic on Williams Street

Traffic-calming feature can provide gateways to Hodges Square

Improved walkability features can better connect businesses & residences



Pedestrian and Multi-modal Connectivity

Extra road can be repurposed as a continuous bike corridor from Connecticut College to Downtown

Dedicated signing can redirect truck traffic off of Williams St. to more convenient access at Crystal Road

Connections across the river can bring new walk & bike traffic to Hodges Square



Hodges Square Existing Bicycle Path and Proposed Bicycle Connections

Implement Williams Street Placemaking Plans with Some Small Adjustments (cont.)

Thames River Bike/Walk Crossing



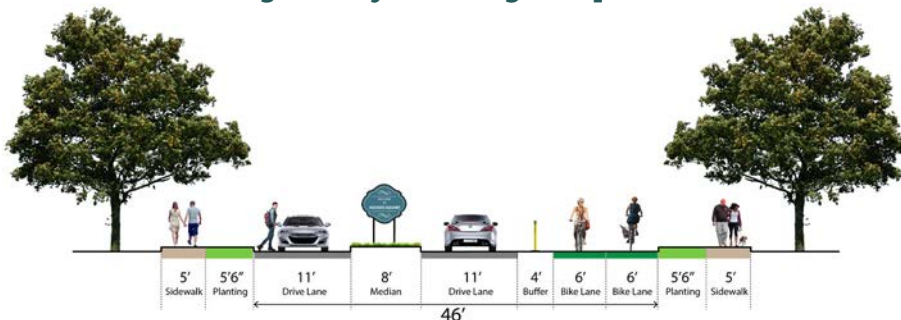
State Pier Road

A connected bike corridor?



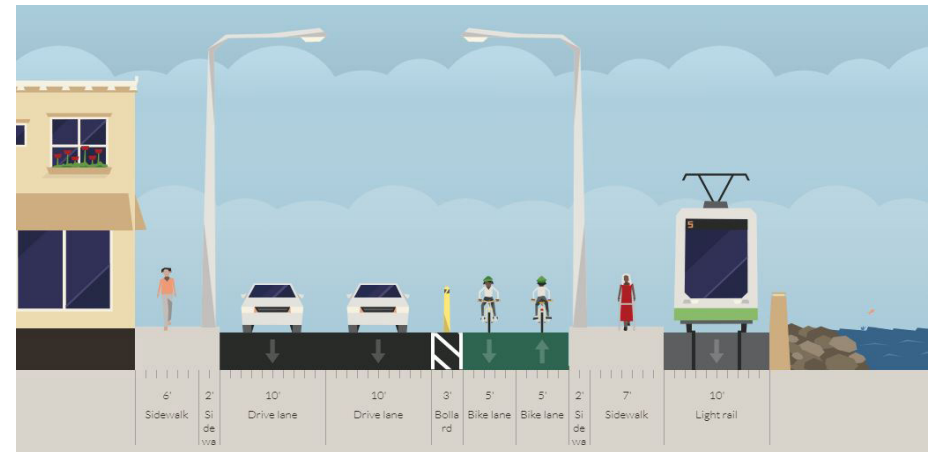
State Pier Road at Crystal Drive

A gateway to Hodges Square?



Water Street to Downtown

A complete walk/bike corridor?



Implement Williams Street Placemaking Plans with Some Small Adjustments (cont.)

Existing



Proposed



Enhance the I-95 Underpass

Rationale

The underpass is the key pedestrian and bike link to downtown New London. In its present state it is foreboding. Moreover, the Underpass is a prominent feature when viewed from Hodges Square. There are a number of precedents of underpass place-making through art, lighting, public amenities or supportive parking that can be applied here. Done well, it can serve not only as an amenity to the neighborhood but also as an attraction.

Strategies

One of the key barriers to moving forward is the lack of a ConnDOT policy regarding underpass activation. The City and Hodges Square Village Association can provide support and examples* to ConnDOT. It is recommended to move forward on low cost initial steps such as lighting and/or paint options rather than a more elaborate park and stormwater upgrades.



*The links below may serve as a starting point of example approaches ConnDOT can take toward supporting this action:

- MASSDOT Infra-Space pilot program (conceptual): <https://holyokeredevlopment.com/i-391-infraspac-project>
- MNDOT program (policy and design guidance): <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/35w94/pdf/ea/I-35W-ea-Appendix-G/I-35W-ea-Appendix-G-Public-Art-Framework-Plan.pdf>



Dallas I-35



Boston I-93



Boston Storrow Dr



Dayton I-75

Connect Hodges Square, the Old Mill and Riverside Park through Signage and Gateway Development

Rationale

The Village of Hodges Square has many assets, but three major ones stand out: the Old Mill, Riverside Park and Hodges Square itself. Emphasizing and connecting these landmarks by adding clear wayfinding, amenities and programming will help transform them into anchors for the community, and activity nodes,



Strategies

For Hodges Square:

- Extend paving to create 2-way cycletrack along State Pier Road that connects to Williams Street bike lane, and move parking to narrow the overly wide intersection of State Pier Road and Williams Street
- Improve the State Pier Road and Williams Street intersection with striped crosswalk and reconfiguration with curb bump-out to reduce pedestrian crossing distance across State Pier Road and Williams Street.
- Add bike crossing to connect State Pier Road cycletrack and Williams Street bike infrastructure.
- Add gateway stormwater landscaping under the highway and rail bridges.

For the Old Mill:

- Improve the highway and bridge underpasses and embankments with public art and wayfinding to connect Old Mill and Hodges Square.

For Riverside Park:

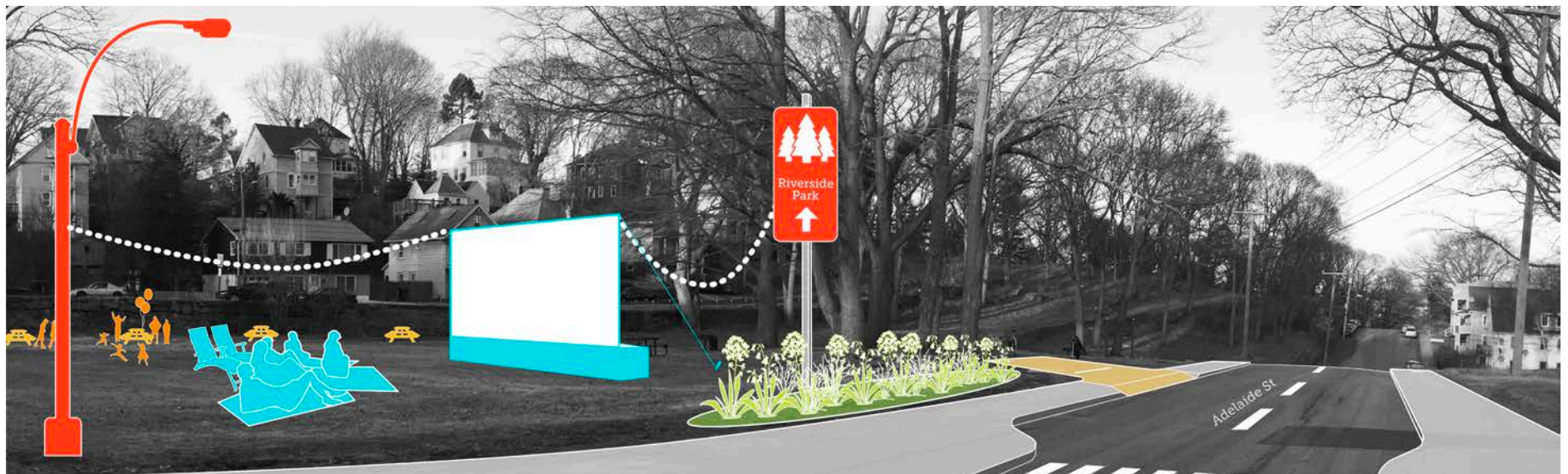
- Add new prominent signage.
- Add amenities such as more seating, tables and lighting.
- Add sidewalks on Adelaide Street and a ramped entrance to the park.
- Improve landscaping.

Connect Hodges Square, the Old Mill and Riverside Park through Signage and Gateway Development (cont.)

Existing



Reimagined Gateway for Riverside Park



Encourage Use of Existing City Programs such as the Facade Improvement Program in Hodges Square

Rationale

Hodges Square “curb appeal” limitations extend to several of its commercial properties. New London already has the Facade Improvement Program to help assist property owners with storefront enhancements. Promotion of this existing incentive program to property owners can encourage more participation in the program.

Strategies

- Amend City ordinances and program guidelines to include Hodges Square
- Meet with property and business owners regarding the façade program
 - Create a pitchbook regarding use of the program



Results of Muncie Indiana Façade Program



Before



After



Before



After

Implementation

| Recommendation | Key Next Steps | Rough-cut Budget |
|--|--|--|
| Activate Hodges Square through a series of low cost actions and temporary interventions to help prove the market | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make by-right zoning changes • Develop a parklet / pop up / mobile (e.g. food truck) approval policy • Pitch pop up ideas to business owners and property owners • Identify potential implementation partners / funders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project and event specific • Should not be a cost to the City |
| Implement Williams Street placemaking plans with some small adjustments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installing gateway islands for Hodges Square which also serve to calm traffic • Adding curb extensions, crossing islands • Providing bicycle merge box where lanes end • Properly aligning bike lanes • Continuing dashed lane bike markings through intersections • Drawing bicycle sharrows • Adding pedestrian yield markings and signs • Improving crosswalks to adhere to NACTO guidelines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be done as part of current William St plan many of these solutions can be done with paint |
| Enhance the I-95 underpass | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ConnDOT with policy examples and precedent images • Identify method of selection of intervention – design competition, RFI/Q, • Identify and contact potential partners – Conn College, Lyman, HSA etc • Secure ConnDOT approval • Launch project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paint or lighting can be low cost initial interventions • <\$100k • ConnDOT could help fund |
| Connect Hodges Square, the Old Mill and Riverside Park through signage and gateway development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with Conservancy and HSA on specific action items such as programming approach • Develop a logo & identity for the signage. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$20k for signage design work & creation • \$10k for landscaping • Programming costs can vary – inflatable large movie screen can be up to \$17k |
| Encourage use of existing City programs such as the Facade Improvement Program in Hodges Square | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend City ordinances and program guidelines as required to make Hodges Sq eligible for existing program • Create a pitchbook about the program and how it can be used • Meet with property owners to make them aware of program. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new funds • Uses existing program |

Conclusion



Hodges Square Village has multiple opportunities to maximize its vibrancy. Williams Street serves as an important connection to the rest of the City of New London, and assets such as Riverside Park, the Old Mill and Hodges Square are prime targets for activation and enhancements. By building connections between each of these assets and enhancing their character, Hodges Square will be able to make the most of these assets.

But for these assets to be leveraged, New London will need to update its approaches to development regulations, specifically related to permissible uses, in order to welcome the types of business activities that will encourage students, artists and new businesses to come down into the area. It will also need to engage with existing local businesses and property owners about using tools such as pop-ups and the facade improvement program generate more foot traffic to support the remaining retail base.

While these actions may not appear to be novel or particularly innovative, they are practical, implementable steps that do not require a substantial amount of resources or have a high degree of complexity. Taking critical first steps toward implementing improvements and securing some wins in Hodges Square is key to its long term restoration as a vibrant, thriving neighborhood.

Appendix

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Request for Proposal



City of New London



City of Groton

Request for Proposal

Redevelopment Analysis and Action Plan for
Thames Street, Groton and Hodges Square, New London
A Thames River Innovation Places (TRIP) sponsored project
Proposal No. 2019-01

I. Introduction

The City of Groton, CT and the City of New London CT in partnership and under the umbrella of Thames River Innovation Places (TRIP) are seeking a professional firm, individual or consortium to work with both municipalities to prepare a Redevelopment Analysis plans for Thames/Bridge St. in the City of Groton and Hodges Square in the City of New London. This process and resulting document(s) will serve to strengthen the function, sense of place, economic vitality, and transportation infrastructure to create a blueprint for redevelopment with a focus on specific and individualized real estate analysis and recommendations, for both areas that will serve to guide public and private investments to build sense of place and economic opportunity.

II. About Us

In June of 2017, Thames River Innovation Places (TRIP), which is made of up of public, private, and nonprofit sectors in the communities of New London and Groton in Southeastern Connecticut, was designated as an INNOVATION PLACE by CTNext. (CTNext is a public/private network of entrepreneurs, mentors, service providers and others helping Connecticut's most promising startups succeed and grow).

The designation allocated grant funds to TRIP to support five separate projects, designed to both strengthen the entrepreneurial community, the livability and the overall economy in the region and enhance coordinated efforts to attract and retain the substantial uptick in need for employees at General Dynamics-Electric Boat division.

This project, known as the Redevelopment/Placemaking project, is one such project under the TRIP umbrella. It is a multi-municipal project overseen by staff of the cities of Groton and New London. The intent of the project is to generate plans, including recommendation for joint or municipal specific projects leading to aggressive private and public investment, redevelopment, and physical improvements in each City.

The focus of the project is on two separate but linked districts in each City. The districts are linked by a multi-use path over the Thames River. The districts follow:

Hodges Square, City of New London is:

Hodges Square is an area of historic significance to the City of New London. The district consists of a 65.8-acre neighborhood in the northern section of the city. The neighborhood houses one of the city's oldest historic residential properties feature architectural styles typical of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including Queen Anne, Colonial Revival and Dutch Colonial Revival, an 18-acre city park - Riverside Park, a historic mill (c. 1650) that represents one of the earliest mill industrial sites in the country and historic district as of October 2016. Hodges Square is the connecting neighborhood for Connecticut College and the Coast Guard Academy to the southern portion of the city and links the neighborhood, the downtown area and Waterfront Park.

Williams Street is the main artery connecting Hodges Square and serving as a gateway into the community and the City of New London. Concentrations of businesses are along Williams Street with Interstate 95 which creates a significant challenge for visual appeal and livability. The roadways are complex, filled with on/off ramps, and nine overpasses mixing city and state streets together in concrete spaghetti-like crossroads. This exchange is the main connecting section of the north/south economic corridor.

In 2013, a Master Plan for Creative Placemaking was developed for Hodges Square highlighting assets, challenges, and opportunities of the area.

Thames/Bridge St., City of Groton is:

Thames/Bridge St. is the gateway to the City of Groton and has served culturally, socially, and economically as its heart or center since the City came into existence. The area is bounded by the North bound exit ramp from I-95 at Bridge St., where the multi-use path over the Gold Star Bridge is accessed, to the Southern end of Thames St. at Eastern Point Rd., (the northern boundary of the campus of the Electric Boat division of General Dynamics).

Bridge Street, which runs into Thames Street at its western end, is made up of small and dated strip type commercial and office developments with adjacent residential uses.

Thames Street runs parallel to the Thames River for its entirety. It has historically served as the City's Main Street and Downtown Center. The neighborhood fronting on and surrounding Thames Street, is marked by mixed uses including diverse residential uses (single-family, 1 and 2 family homes and apartments) commercial, office and retail and limited industrial/warehousing uses. Encompassed within its boundary is a Federal Historic District (Groton Bank), several historic sites and museums, the Fort Griswold State Park, WWII Sub Vet Memorial East, the Bill Library, and two small City owned open parcels that sandwich Thames St. and provide public water front access.

III. Statement of Work

The Redevelopment/Placemaking project team is looking for qualified multi-disciplinary planning, real estate and place and urban design professionals (Consultants) to submit proposals to create a Redevelopment/Placemaking Plan for the two districts within the two cities. The Plan is meant to promote attractive architectural appearance and historic preservation, enhance viable and sustainable redevelopment of properties within each area, as well as improve physical, social, and economic development of both Cities by using **Economic Development, Redevelopment best practices and Smart Growth** principles such as Transportation orientated development (TOD) to further sustainability. The Plan is meant to activate and guide public and private investment and programming for Thames/Bridge St. and Hodges Square with a focus on Redevelopment and Real Estate analysis for the Thames/Bridge area and Smart Growth and Transportation oriented development in Hodges Square. The plan must integrate initiatives already underway, such as the creation of a Tax Increment Financing District for the Thames/Bridge St. area and the Federal Transportation Alternatives Block Grant allocated to Hodges Square.

The work will include:

- Analysis and recommendations to encourage high quality **public and private property** commercial and residential development emphasizing the principles of walkability, connectivity, mixed-uses and diversity, compatible architecture, historical integrity and urban design, traditional neighborhood structure, smart transportation, sustainability and quality of life.
- Specific and individualized real estate analysis and recommendations, to guide public and private investments to build sense of place and economic opportunity.
- Designs and recommendations that make adequate provisions for pedestrian and vehicular traffic, give sufficient public access on the Gold Star Bridge, restructure and emphasize the gateways to the multi- use sidewalk over the bridge linking each community;
- Recommendations and design objectives for private and public property that supports the significance of the presence of resources such as the Thames River front, historical sites, architecture and other unique areas assets such as the Coast Guard Academy and Connecticut College.
- Ensure that access to the Thames River is maintained and/or enhanced.
- Review the public space realm and make recommendations for streetscape and multi-use path gateway improvements. Identify where each City may strategically wish to invest in improvements to the streetscapes, bike and pedestrian connections, or public spaces.
- Recommendations to encourage high quality **public and private property** commercial development emphasizing the principles of walkability, connectivity, mixed-uses and diversity, mixed housing, compatible architecture, historical integrity and urban design,

traditional neighborhood structure, smart transportation, sustainability and quality of life.

- Assess the impact of parking requirements on infill and redevelopment feasibility as well as providing directions for the street network, laneways and wayfinding. Recommend public parking strategies, if additional parking resources are needed. Assistance to both municipalities to execute scope of work and leverage other grant funding.
- Identify unique challenges related to development and placemaking improvements within each district and recommend approaches to address those challenges

Overall Goals

- **Appearance & character:** Use existing urban space to help create an attractive and strong sense of place through physical improvement that highlights and enhances the each district by:
 - a. Improve the function of each space as a bike/pedestrian corridors and gateway.
 - b. Creating a priority outline and strategy of the issues and opportunities within each district.
 - c. Evaluate infrastructure including signage, streetscape, right of way amenities, public spaces, access to the River (Groton), public art opportunities,
 - d. Evaluate architectural highlights to protect or enhance
- **Real Estate Analysis :**
 - a. Develop an analysis that will inform City staff as to the type of improvement recommended for to existing properties. Issues such as suitability for renovation, financial/highest and best use analyses, maintenance, parking, site enhancements, infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, parks, open space etc.) should be considered.
 - b. Establish redevelopment priority sites where initial investments will yield the greatest impact. (The one catalyst development)
 - c. Provide recommendations of proposed uses and necessary or desired zoning changes to existing land use zoning.
 - d. Establish public and private sector priorities on an area by area and property by property basis.
- **Land Use:**
 - a. Zoning regulation to support best and highest use and for potential zoning changes to implement vision.
 - b. Assess environment, open space and public realm conditions.
 - c. Address housing by reviewing mixed-use residential housing types and price points best suited for the market include viability of live-work units.
 - d. Address methods to enhance and to preserve the historic character of the area.
 - e. Address methods to sustain and encourage growth of commercial, business, and other compatible non-residential uses c throughout both districts.

- **Parking:**
 - a. Assess current parking conditions and future parking capacity and requirements.
 - b. Recommendation for parking management policy strategy.
- **Implementation Strategy:** Identification of specific implementation strategies and development of an action plan with goals and objectives that include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Identify multiple funding sources for public improvements
 - b. Identify incentive options and possible public-private deal structure for key redevelopments sites, both public and private.
 - c. Recommend proposed policy changes as needed.
 - d. Recommend a prioritized program of implementation measures include regulations, policies, and financing measures to implement the plan.

District Goals (Thames Street, Groton and Hodges Square, New London)

- **Goals specific to Hodges Square, New London**
 1. Identifying connection between Hodges Square Riverside Park, old Town Mill, and Downtown New London.
 2. Re-establishment, promotion and enhancement of the district/ village as a gateway.
 3. Community and stakeholders participation. The planning will include meaningful participation from the Hodges Square Village Association and property owners.
- **Goals specific to Thames/Bridge Street, Groton**
 1. Re-establishment, promotion and enhancement of the district/area as the City center with emphasis on using the Thames riverfront as development catalyst.
 2. Engagement of existing property owner participation throughout the redevelopment plan process and recommendations for creating mechanisms for ongoing participation.
 3. Maintaining Historic integrity of the district

IV. Submission Requirements

At a minimum, proposals should include the following:

1. A description of the lead consultant's understanding and approach to the project, including projected timeline and anticipated project deliverables
2. Expertise of the team: the roles and responsibilities of the proponent and any of its agents, employees and sub-contractors who will be involved in providing the deliverables, together with the identity of those who will be performing those roles and their relevant respective expertise;
3. Examples of comparable projects completed in the past 5 years, with references for each. The Cities will contact references without prior notice.
4. Fee proposal based on the scope of services and the proposed approach detailing the time and budget allotted to each consultant and sub-consultant by task. The Fee

Proposal should include any and all travel, materials, time and delivery and all fees for tasks as described in the Consultants response to the RFP

5. A description of anticipated type and level of support the consultant will require/expect from the Cities—such as staff support, provision of meeting/studio space, materials, etc.;

Proposals should be responsive to the items presented in this RFQ, but can be enhanced to the benefit of the needs of this project.

Selection Criteria

While the review will encompass the entirety of the submissions, in evaluating the Proposals, the focus will be on the following key factors:

- A. The Consultants understanding of the goals of the Redevelopment/Placemaking project and the municipal and district specific needs.
- B. The Consultant's demonstrated and successful experience with projects of comparable size and complexity;
- C. The expertise and experience of the Consultant and Team in addressing Real Estate analysis, infrastructure challenges, Space and Placemaking design, in a mixed private/public project.

Reserved Rights and Options

The City reserves and holds the right, at its sole discretion, to:

- A. Accept any Proposal;
- B. Reject any or all Proposals;
- C. Not enter into a transaction with any Respondent;
- D. Suspend, terminate or revise all or part of the RFP process for any reason;
- E. Negotiate with a selected Consultant without being bound by any provision in a
- F. Proposal;
- G. Request or receive additional information regarding any Proposal;
- H. Conduct investigations with respect to the qualifications and experience of
- I. Respondents;
- J. Take any other action affecting the RFP or the process that is in both City's best interest.

No Suspension or Debarment

By submitting the information called for by this RFP, the Respondent submitting the information certifies that neither it nor those within its organization or proposed team are under suspension or debarment by any governmental entity, instrumentality, or authority.

Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions including a proposed payment schedule will be negotiated between the Town and the selected proponent.

All proposals must be received by 2:00 pm on July 30, 2018 at the following address:

Dedra Aker, Purchasing Agent
City of New London
13 Masonic Street
New London, CT 06320

Proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope and shall be labeled "Proposal for Redevelopment/Placemaking Project." Please submit five (5) hard copies and one (1) USB disk of your proposal with any attachments.

TO: Sybil Tetteh
City of New London

FROM: Kevin Hively
NP

DATE: 7/16/19

RE: Rough Cut Financial analysis for Prospective Development in Hodges Square

Below is a unit-based financial feasibility screening tool NP uses to test the viability of a project. It is not an in-depth *proforma* based on a specific project with a specific capital structure. The generic project below has several key assumptions based on industry averages, local market conditions and the test fit:

- Density = 10 units per acre which is 10x higher than the density of Hodges Sq but consistent with apartment developments in the area
- Rent = \$1.50/ft which is among the highest in the regional market but representative of new construction rents.
- Average unit size = 850 sqft to represent a roughly 60/40 split between studios/one bedrooms versus 2 bedrooms.
- Construction cost per unit = which estimates a \$163k unit finished unit (industry average for a mid level amenitized building 2-3 story built on podium) cost plus \$7k/unit for parking, landscape and hardscape. It does not assume major infrastructure improvements or land preparation costs.
- Debt / Equity = 70/30
- Cap Rate = 8.0% based on industry averages
- Real estate taxes = based on rate of \$43.62/\$1000
- Land costs = ZERO. NP assumed for purposes of this analysis that there was no land cost. Depending on the nature of the transaction (existing property owner versus acquirer) there would be land cost. Also depending on the location there would also be demolition costs of preexisting structures which are not included in this analysis.
- Contingency Allowance = ZERO – this is a base test case analysis.

The analysis (next page) of this generic test case found a \$6.4m or 32% gap between the market value of \$2.98m versus base development costs of \$9.4m. Elimination of the taxes through a 10 year TIF policy reduces the gap by \$4m which is significant but the project still has a viability gap of \$3.9m.

| | | |
|--|--------------------|---------------|
| 7/18/2019 | | |
| Property Name/Address | 1234 Generic St | Value |
| Lot Acreage | | 3.70 acres |
| Maximum Allowable Units | 10.0/acre | 37 units |
| Required Parking Spots | 1.0/unit | 37 spots |
| Pre-Construction | | 18 months |
| Construction Schedule | | 24 months |
| Post-Construction Lease-Up (Monthly Rate) | 5 units/mo. | 8 months |
| Total Time to Stabilization | | 50 months |
| Average Unit Size | | 850 RSF |
| Average Monthly Rent (today's value) | \$1.50 PSF | \$1,275 |
| Average Monthly Parking Rent | | \$100 |
| Annual Gross Potential Revenue - Apartments | | \$566,100 |
| Annual Gross Potential Revenue - Parking | | \$44,400 |
| Less Annual Vacancy and Credit Losses | 7.00% | (\$42,735) |
| Annual Potential Revenue, Net | | \$567,765 |
| Operating Expenses - today's value | Monthly \$350/unit | (\$155,400) |
| Real Estate Taxes - today's value | \$416/unit | (\$184,704) |
| Total Operating and Taxes | \$766/unit | (\$340,104) |
| Retail Component | | 12,000 SF |
| NNN Rent - today's value | \$0.00 PSF | \$0 |
| "Current" Stabilized Annual Net Operating Income (NOI) | | \$227,661 |
| Base Building Hard Cost & Contingency - today's value | \$170,000/unit | 67.0% |
| Retail Tenant Improvements - today's value | \$15.00 PSF | 1.9% |
| Soft Cost % Hard Cost & Contingency & TIs | 30.00% | 20.7% |
| Senior Construction Loan to Total Project Cost | 70.00% | |
| Construction Loan Interest & Operating Deficit | 8.00% | 10.4% |
| Land Cost | \$0/unit | 0.0% |
| Total Project Cost (TPC) | | \$9,392,283 |
| Per Apartment | | \$253,845 |
| "Current" Stabilized NOI Yield on Cost (Cap Rate) | | 2.42% |
| Source of Funds: Senior Construction Loan | 70.00% | \$6,574,598 |
| Source of Funds: Equity | 30.00% | \$2,817,685 |
| | | \$9,392,283 |
| Income Annual Inflation Factor | 2.00% | |
| Expenses, Taxes and CapEx Annual Inflation | 2.00% | |
| Years to Stabilization | 5.00 years | |
| Annual Capital Expenditures | \$250/unit | |
| Future Stabilized NOI after CapEx for Valuation | | \$245,966 |
| Future Stabilized Yield on Cost (Cap Rate) | | 2.62% |
| Asset Sale Capitalization Rate | 8.00% | |
| Future Gross Capitalized Value | | \$3,074,578 |
| Per Apartment | | \$83,097 |
| Selling Costs | 3.00% | \$92,237 |
| Sale Proceeds, Net | | \$2,982,341 |
| Pre-Tax Profit on Sale (excludes interim year cash flows) | | (\$6,409,942) |
| Pre-Tax Profit Margin on Sale (excludes interim year cash flows) | | -208.48% |
| Multiple on Invested Equity on Sale (excludes interim year cash flows) | | -1.27x |

| | | |
|--|--------------------|---------------|
| 7/18/2019 | NO TAXES | |
| Property Name/Address | 1234 Generic St | Value |
| Lot Acreage | | 3.70 acres |
| Maximum Allowable Units | 10.0/acre | 37 units |
| Required Parking Spots | 1.0/unit | 37 spots |
| Pre-Construction | | 18 months |
| Construction Schedule | | 24 months |
| Post-Construction Lease-Up (Monthly Rate) | 5 units/mo. | 8 months |
| Total Time to Stabilization | | 50 months |
| Average Unit Size | | 850 RSF |
| Average Monthly Rent (today's value) | \$1.50 PSF | \$1,275 |
| Average Monthly Parking Rent | | \$100 |
| Annual Gross Potential Revenue - Apartments | | \$566,100 |
| Annual Gross Potential Revenue - Parking | | \$44,400 |
| Less Annual Vacancy and Credit Losses | 7.00% | (\$42,735) |
| Annual Potential Revenue, Net | | \$567,765 |
| Operating Expenses - today's value | Monthly \$350/unit | (\$155,400) |
| Real Estate Taxes - today's value | \$0/unit | \$0 |
| Total Operating and Taxes | \$350/unit | (\$155,400) |
| Retail Component | | 12,000 SF |
| NNN Rent - today's value | \$0.00 PSF | \$0 |
| "Current" Stabilized Annual Net Operating Income (NOI) | | \$412,365 |
| Base Building Hard Cost & Contingency - today's value | \$170,000/unit | 67.0% |
| Retail Tenant Improvements - today's value | \$15.00 PSF | 1.9% |
| Soft Cost % Hard Cost & Contingency & TIs | 30.00% | 20.7% |
| Senior Construction Loan to Total Project Cost | 70.00% | |
| Construction Loan Interest & Operating Deficit | 8.00% | 10.4% |
| Land Cost | \$0/unit | 0.0% |
| Total Project Cost (TPC) | | \$9,392,283 |
| Per Apartment | | \$253,845 |
| "Current" Stabilized NOI Yield on Cost (Cap Rate) | | 4.39% |
| Source of Funds: Senior Construction Loan | 70.00% | \$6,574,598 |
| Source of Funds: Equity | 30.00% | \$2,817,685 |
| | | \$9,392,283 |
| Income Annual Inflation Factor | 2.00% | |
| Expenses, Taxes and CapEx Annual Inflation | 2.00% | |
| Years to Stabilization | 5.00 years | |
| Annual Capital Expenditures | \$250/unit | |
| Future Stabilized NOI after CapEx for Valuation | | \$453,973 |
| Future Stabilized Yield on Cost (Cap Rate) | | 4.83% |
| Asset Sale Capitalization Rate | 8.00% | |
| Future Gross Capitalized Value | | \$5,674,662 |
| Per Apartment | | \$153,369 |
| Selling Costs | 3.00% | \$170,240 |
| Sale Proceeds, Net | | \$5,504,422 |
| Pre-Tax Profit on Sale (excludes interim year cash flows) | | (\$3,887,861) |
| Pre-Tax Profit Margin on Sale (excludes interim year cash flows) | | -68.51% |
| Multiple on Invested Equity on Sale (excludes interim year cash flows) | | -0.38x |

Base Conditions



Thames River Innovation Partnership Hodges Square Base Conditions

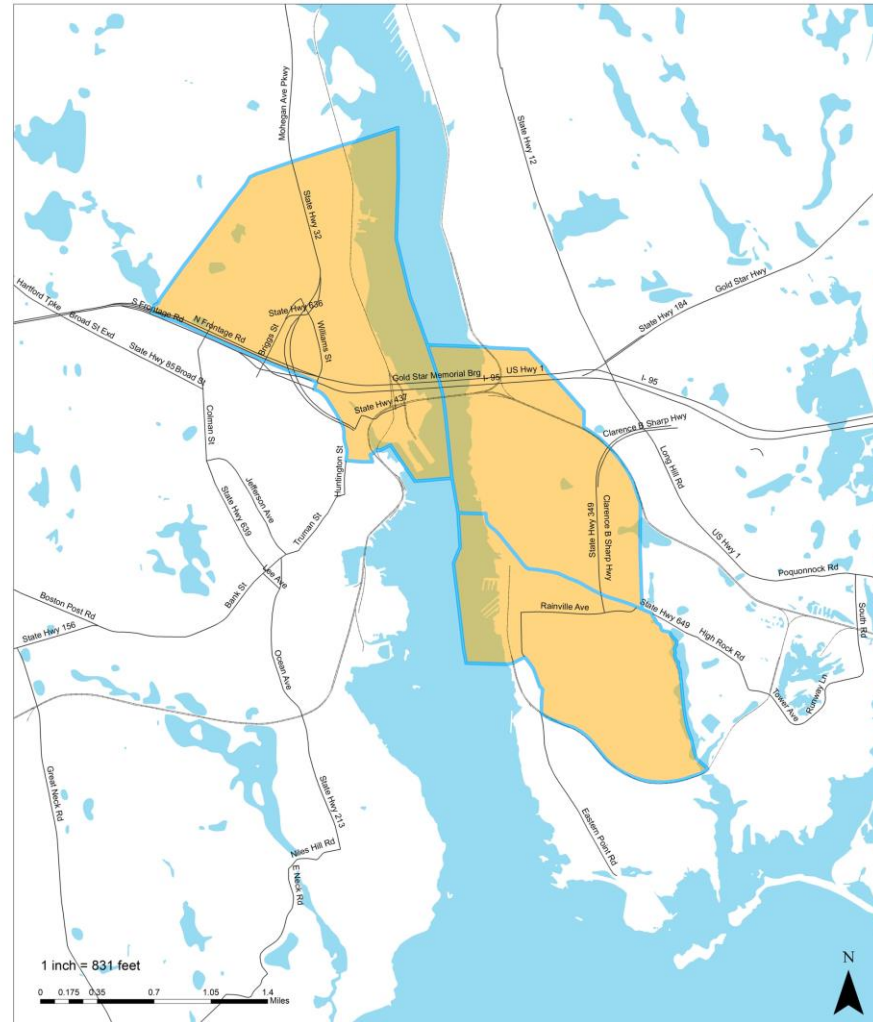
March 26, 2019

Study Context

Study Area

Context

- Encompasses Census tracts 8703, 7024 and 7025
- Focus areas:
 - Hodges Square , New London
 - Thames/Bridge Streets, Groton



Assets

Study Area

Innovation Assets

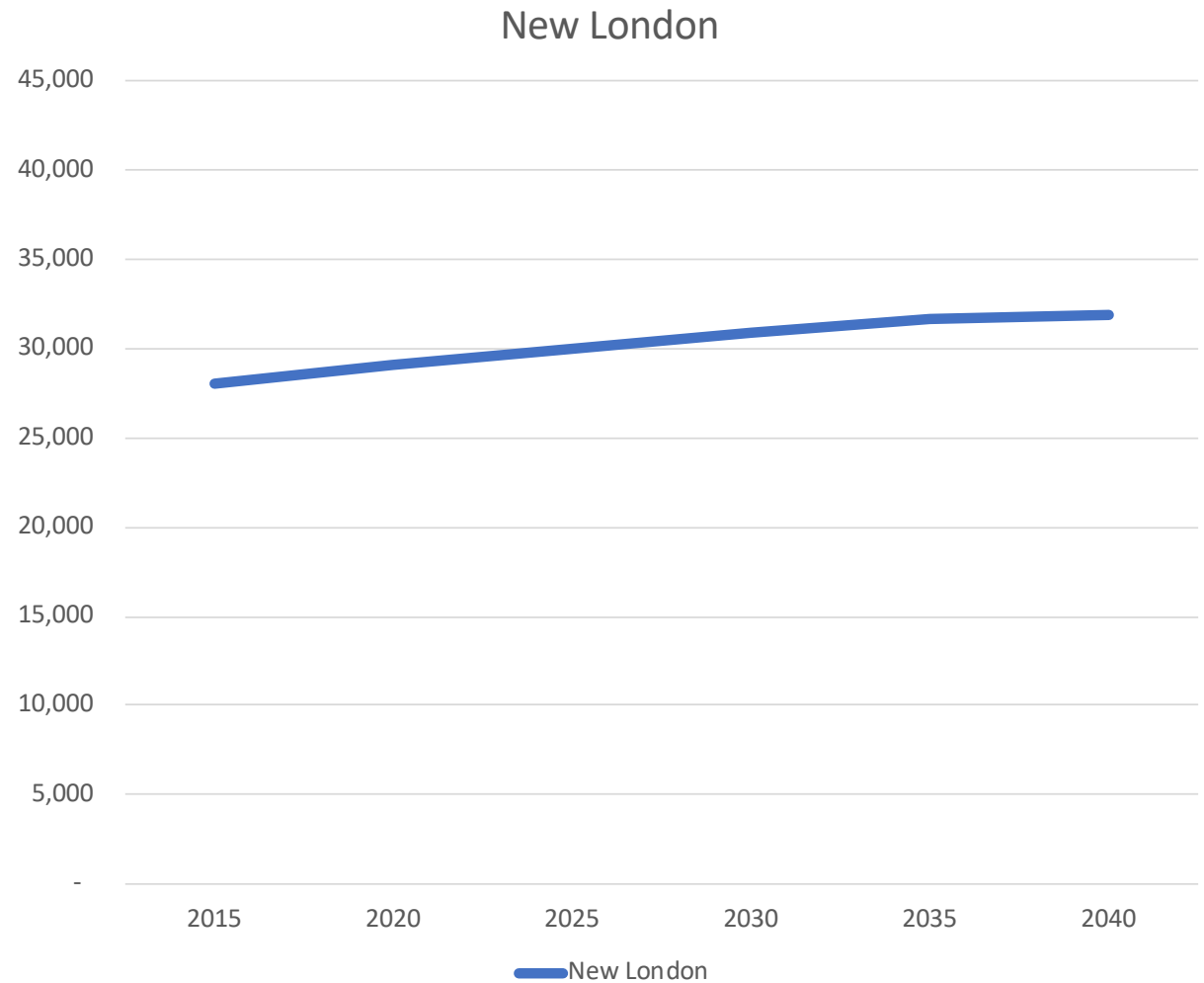
- Institutions/Organizations

Source: City of Groton, City of New London, Ninigret Partners, Interface Studio



Demographic Trends

Population Projection

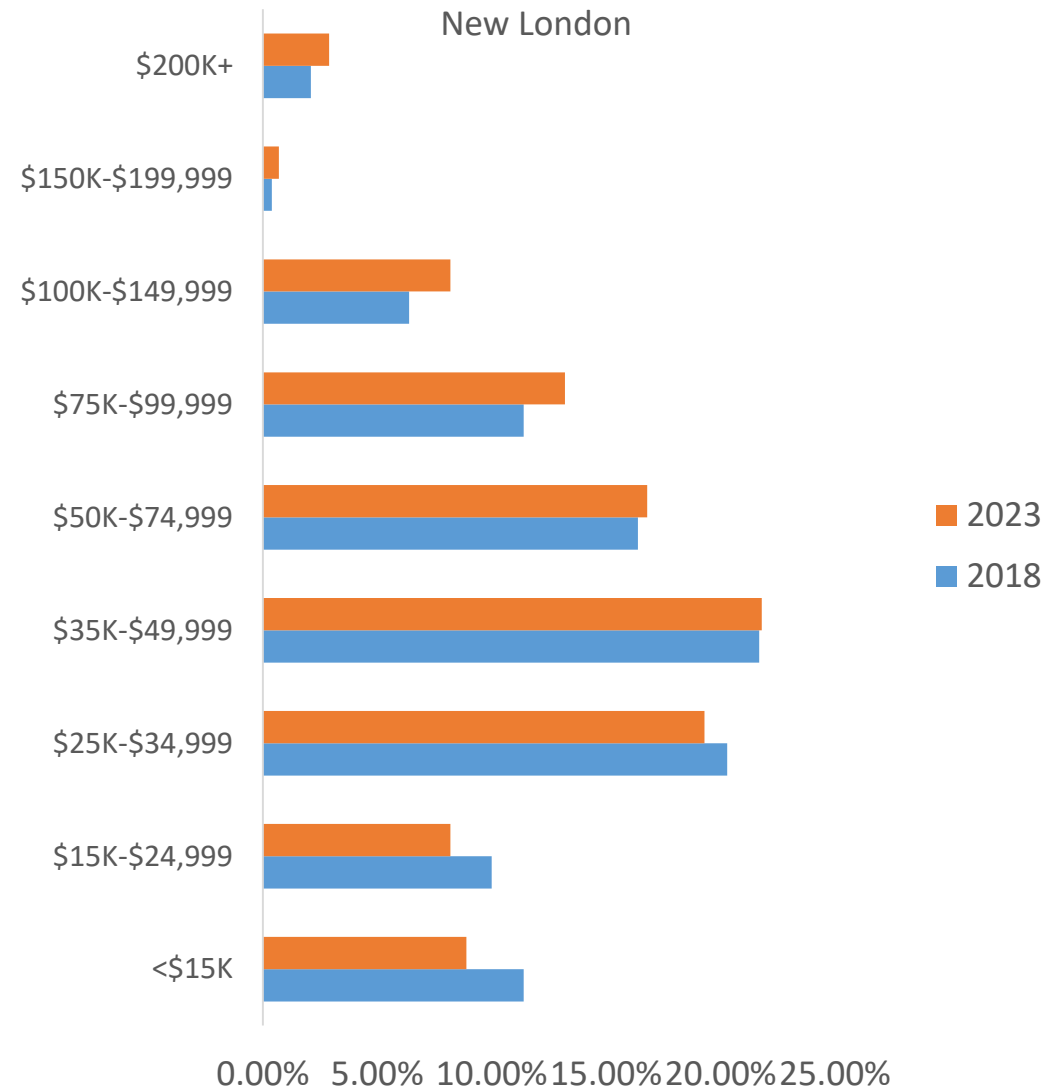


Projected Income Distribution

Groton and New London Study Areas

- Groton study area median income higher than national, lower than CT, higher than New London study area
- Overall, income is projected to increase slightly

Sources: ESRI.com



2018-2023 Change in HH Income

New London Study Area

| | <25 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65-74 | 75+ |
|---------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| <\$15,000 | -1 | -1 | 0 | -2 | -3 | -1 | 0 |
| \$15,000-\$24,999 | -1 | -1 | -1 | 0 | -2 | 0 | 0 |
| \$25,000-\$34,999 | 0 | -1 | -1 | -2 | -1 | 2 | 1 |
| \$35,000-\$49,999 | 0 | 0 | -1 | -1 | -1 | 1 | 1 |
| \$50,000-\$74,999 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| \$75,000-\$99,999 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| \$100,000-\$149,999 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| \$150,000-\$199,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| \$200,000+ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

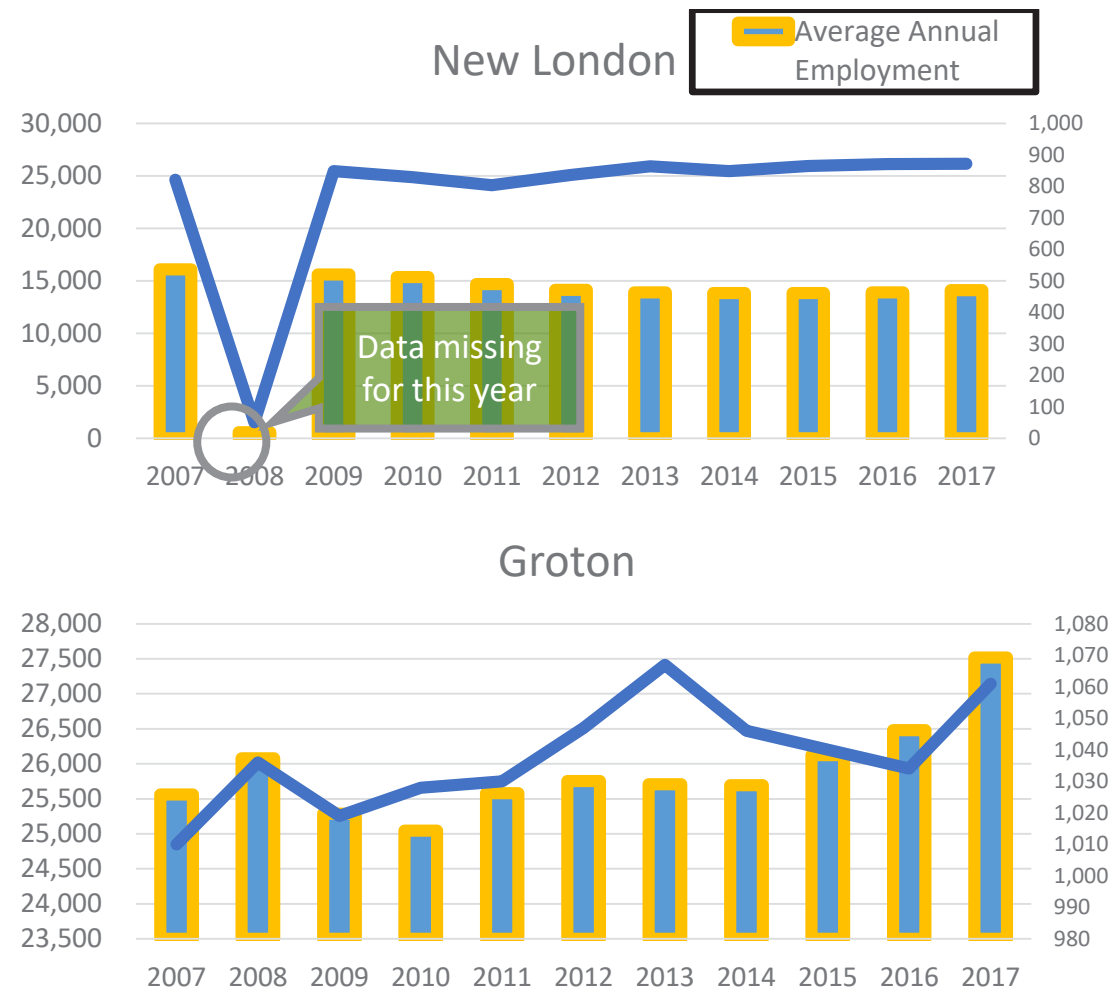
Sources: ESRI.com

Economics & Market Conditions

Employment Growth

- Incremental increase in jobs over last 10 years
- Number of Employers held steady
- Data suppression and missing data is a significant issue

Source: Connecticut Department of Labor Annual Averages - Employment & Wages by Industry (QCEW) by Town

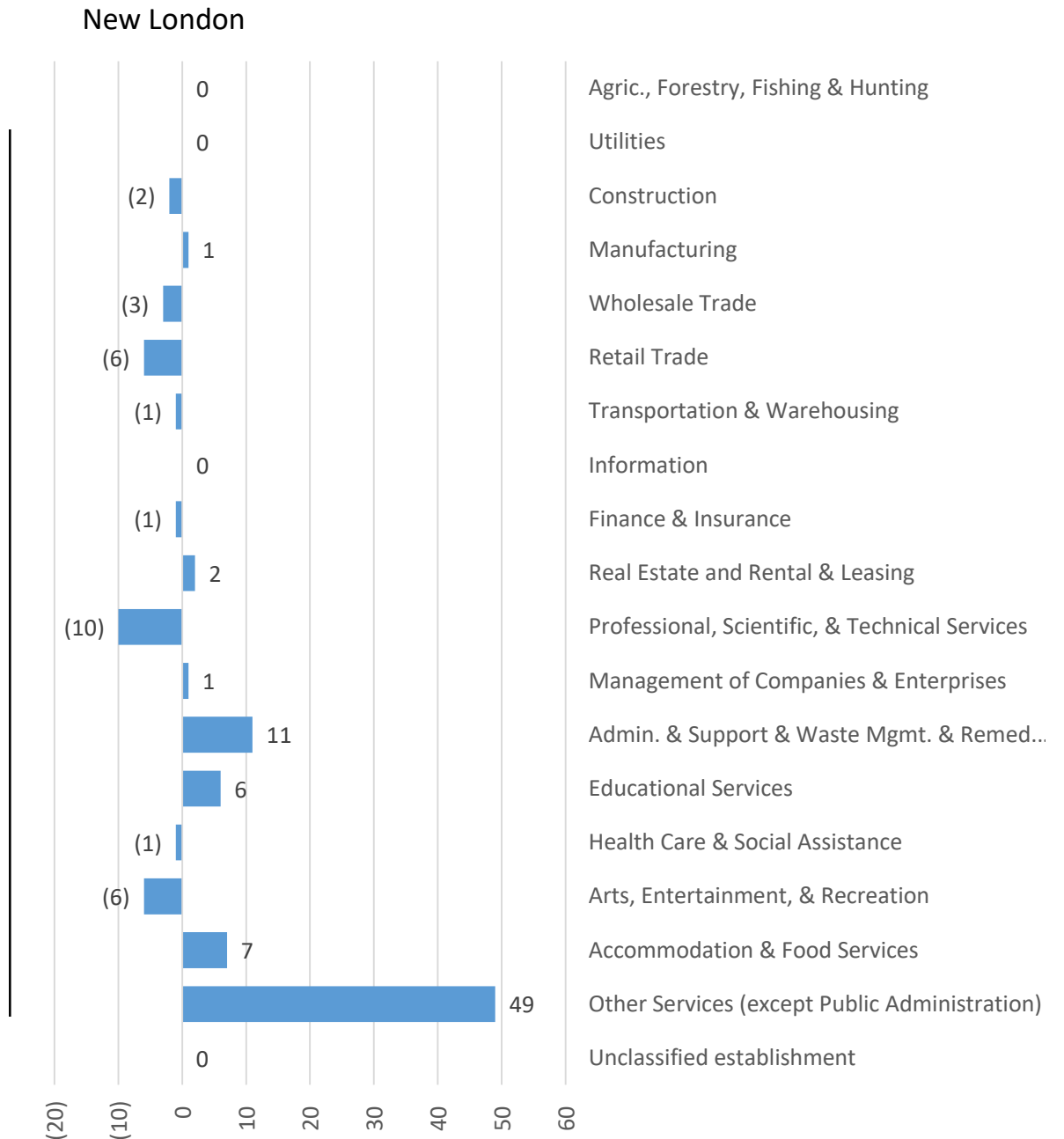


Employment

Employer Net Change by Industry
2007-2017

- Data suppression creates gap for manufacturing information

Source:



Sales Market

Trends

12 Month Market Trends

Groton

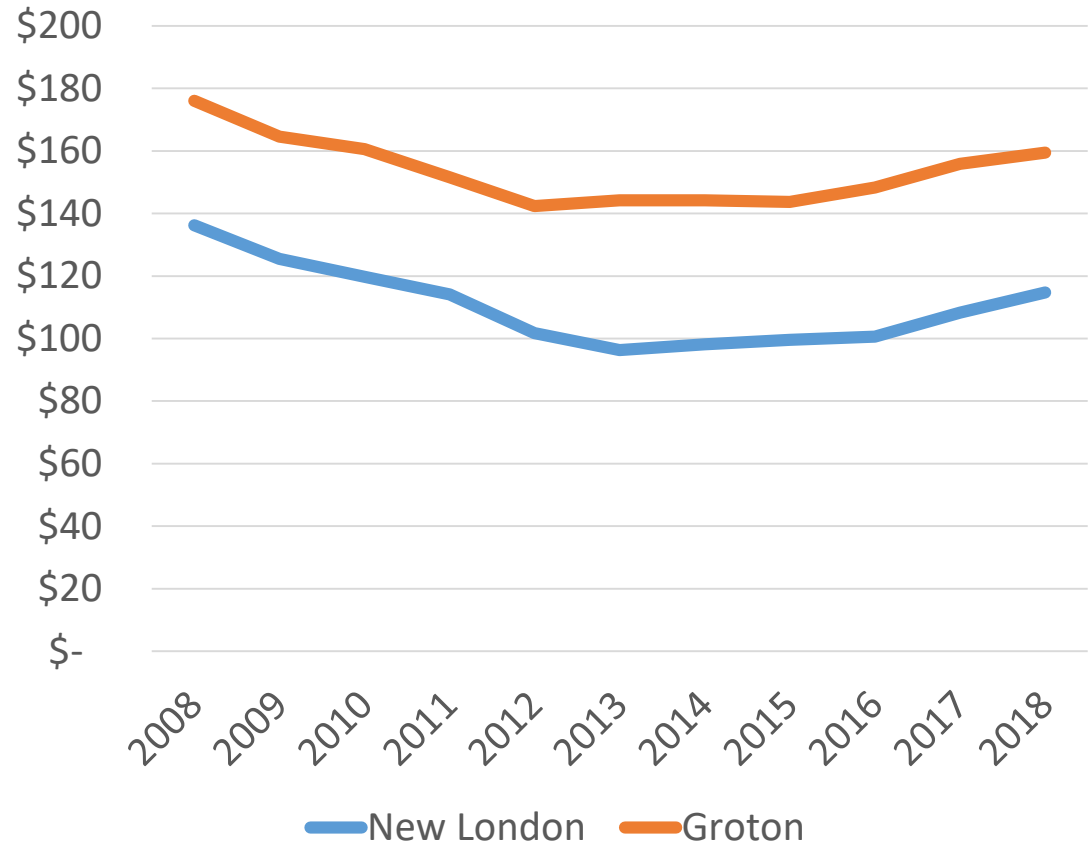
- +\$3,000 (2%) in median home sales
- Average \$/SF rose to \$166, up from \$149

New London

- +\$21,500 (14%) in median home sales
- Average \$/SF fell to \$107, down from \$115.

Source: Zillow.com, January 2019

Seasonally Adjusted Home Index Value



Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI): A smoothed, seasonally adjusted measure of the median estimated home value across a given region and housing type. It is a dollar-denominated alternative to repeat-sales indices

Rental Market

Trends

New London

- Median rental price: \$1,225
- Available units: 25
- Fall 2018: slight decrease in available units

Groton

- Median rental price: \$1,600
- Available units: 29
- Fall 2018: increase in available units

Source: Trulia.com, February 2019

New London

Median Rent



Number of Rentals



Groton

Median Rent



Number of Rentals

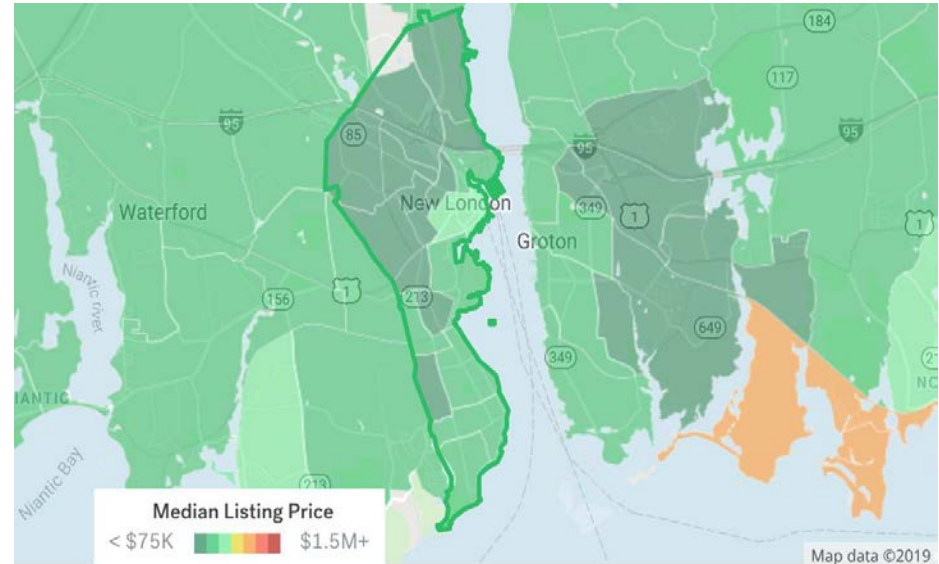


Sales Market

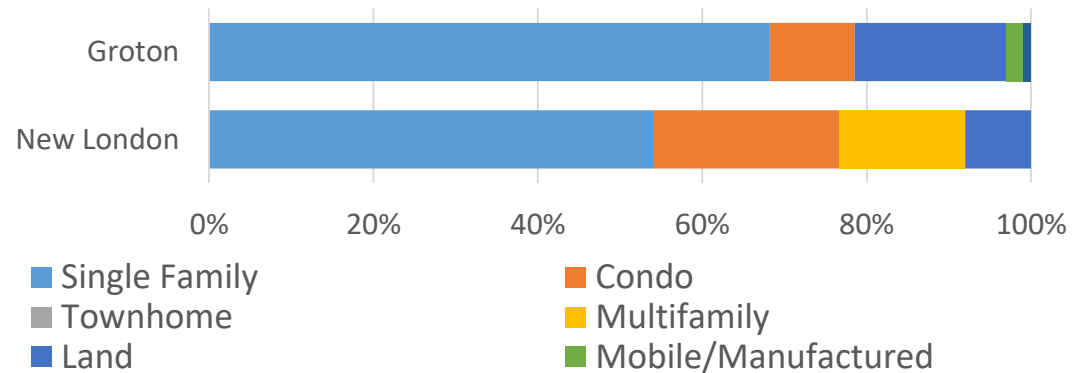
(Jan 2019 snapshot)

| | New London | Groton |
|---------------------|------------|--------|
| Median Sales Price | \$190K | \$168K |
| Price per SF | \$107 | \$166 |
| Properties for Sale | 150 | 233 |

Source: Trulia.com, January 2019



Sales Market by Type



Rental Market

(Feb 2019 snapshot)

New London rents for multiple bedroom options are around \$75 to \$100 less per bedroom

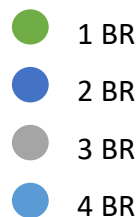
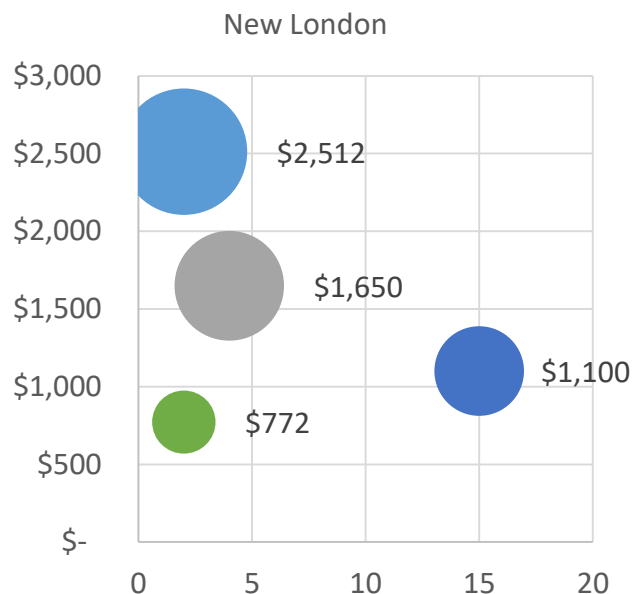
4 BDR apartments in both communities are outliers in terms of per bed pricing

New London

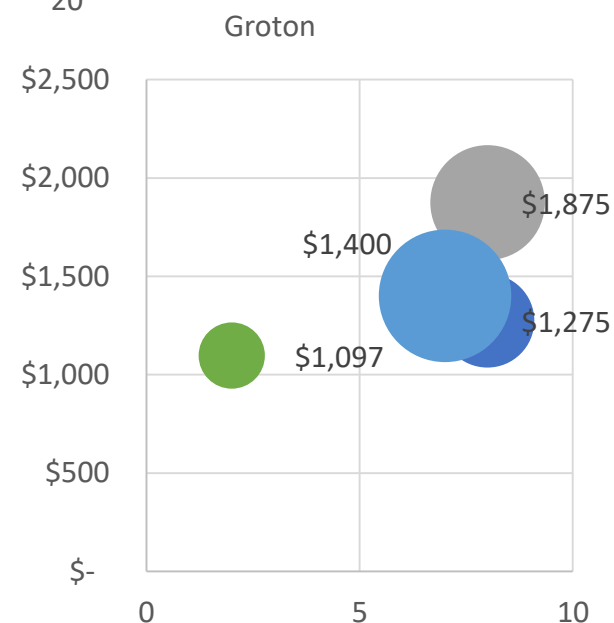
- Median rental price: \$1,225
- Per BDR for multiple bedrooms: around \$550
- Available units: 25

Groton

- Median rental price: \$1,600
- Per BDR for multiple bedrooms: around \$630
- Approximately 62
- Available units: 29



Source: Trulia.com, February 2019



Commercial Space

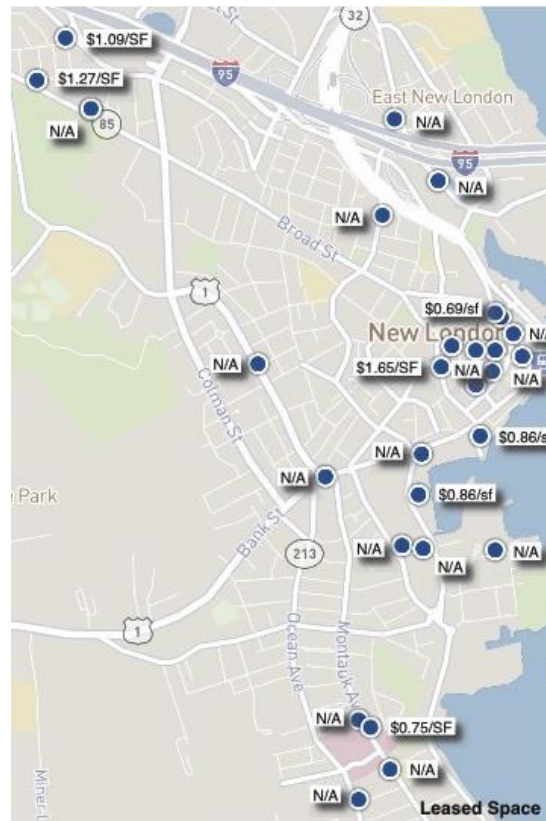
(February 2019 snapshot)

| | New London | Groton |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Sale units available | 49 | 22 |
| SF Range | 1,560-43,896 SF | 1,566-20,102 SF |
| Median asking price | \$292,450 | \$650,000 |
| Median \$/SF | \$60/SF | \$106.86/SF |

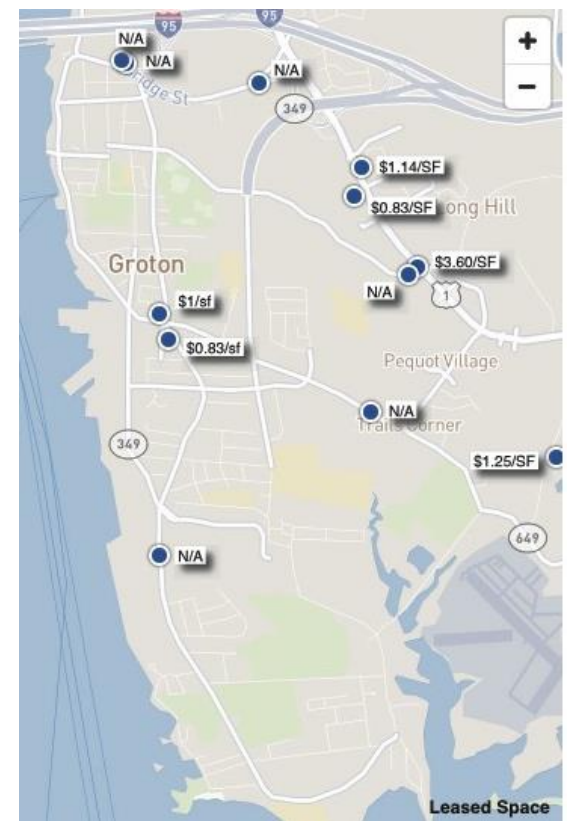
At the present time it is cheaper to buy property than build property

Source: [officespace.com](https://www.officespace.com). February 2019

New London Leased Space



Groton Leased Space

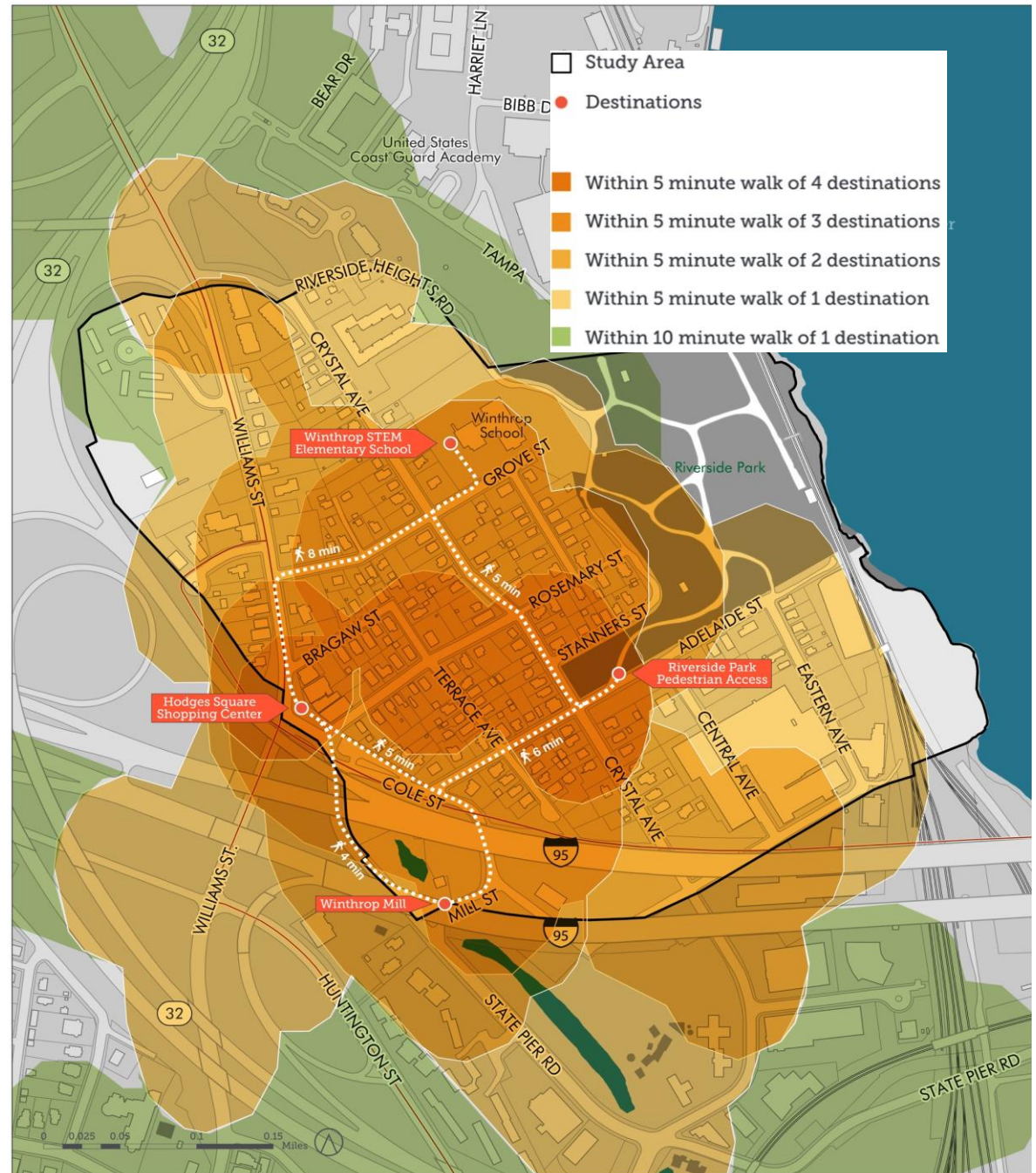


Walkshed Analysis

Hodges Square

- Majority of study area is dense enough to be accessed from most destination locations through a 5 minute walk
- However, the walk is challenging based on topography and the uneven nature of vacancies across the neighborhood

Source: Interface Studio, 2019

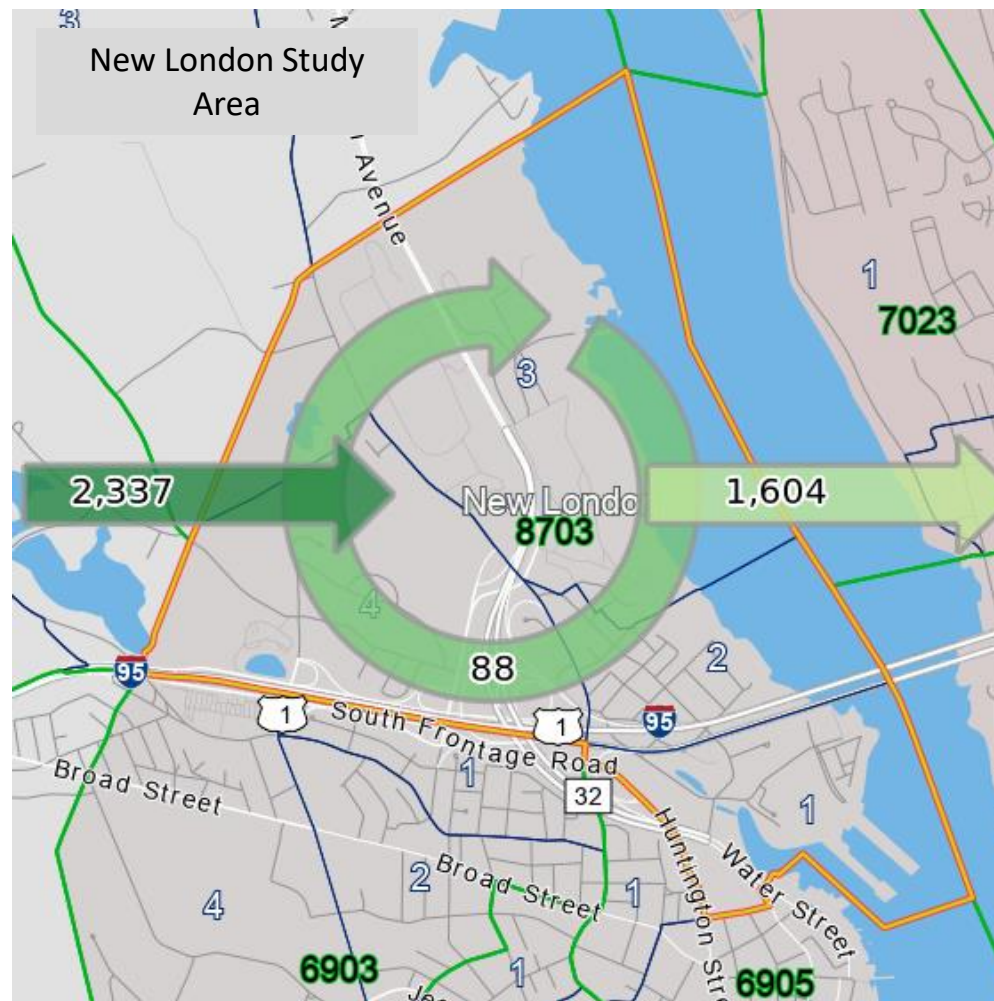


Commuting Patterns

Inflow/Outflow

- A small portion of residents work in the local businesses

Source:



Commuting Patterns

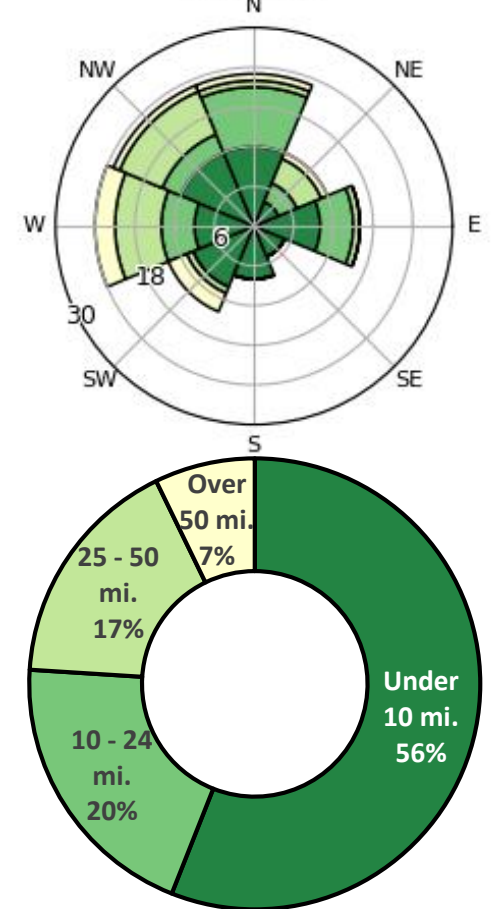
Hodges Square - Work to Home

- 24% of workers travel more than 25 miles

Source:

| Home Location | % |
|---------------------------------|------|
| All Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) | 100% |
| New London city, CT | 17% |
| Norwich city, CT | 5% |
| Groton city, CT | 4% |
| Old Mystic CDP, CT | 3% |
| Oxoboxo River CDP, CT | 2% |
| Westerly CDP, RI | 2% |
| East Haven CDP, CT | 2% |
| Long Hill CDP, CT | 2% |
| Waterford CDP, CT | 2% |
| Willimantic CDP, CT | 2% |
| All Other Locations | 60% |

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2015
All Workers



Retail Gap Analysis

Hodges Square, New London

.25 Mile Radius Analysis

- Food Service and Drinking Places, Liquor Store and Grocery varies widely in sales/SF, average size
 - Liquor Stores: \$/SF from \$190-\$250, SF can vary greatly too.
- A Dunkin Donuts can be supported by the local economy.
- All other establishments would need support from outside immediate study area.
- *Area would need to become a "destination" to better support retail or aimed at the student market*

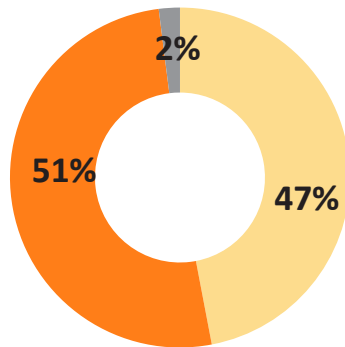
| 2017 Industry Group | Demand (Retail Potential) | Supply (Retail Sales) | Retail Gap |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Food & Beverage Stores | \$1,363,511 | \$4,274,265 | (\$2,910,754) |
| Grocery Stores | \$1,179,679 | \$3,942,809 | (\$2,763,130) |
| Food Services & Drinking Places | \$750,892 | \$1,975,045 | (\$1,224,153) |
| Restaurants/Other Eating Places | \$719,244 | \$1,926,859 | (\$1,207,615) |
| Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores | \$127,490 | \$331,455 | (\$203,965) |
| Vending Machine Operators | \$3,956 | \$0 | \$3,956 |
| Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages | \$11,822 | \$0 | \$11,822 |
| Florists | \$14,475 | \$0 | \$14,475 |

| 2017 Industry Group | 70% of Gap | Average \$/SF | Potential SF | Average Size Needed |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Grocery Stores | (\$1,934,191.00) | \$543 | 3,562 | 46,000 |
| Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores | (\$142,775.50) | \$190 | 751 | 1,900-2,400 |
| Restaurants/Other Eating Places | (\$845,330.50) | | | |
| Starbucks | | \$500 | 1,691 | 2,000 |
| Dunkin Donuts | | \$381 | 2,219 | 2,200 |
| Applebees | | \$436 | 1,939 | 5,500 |
| Chipotle | | \$698 | 1,211 | 2,580 |

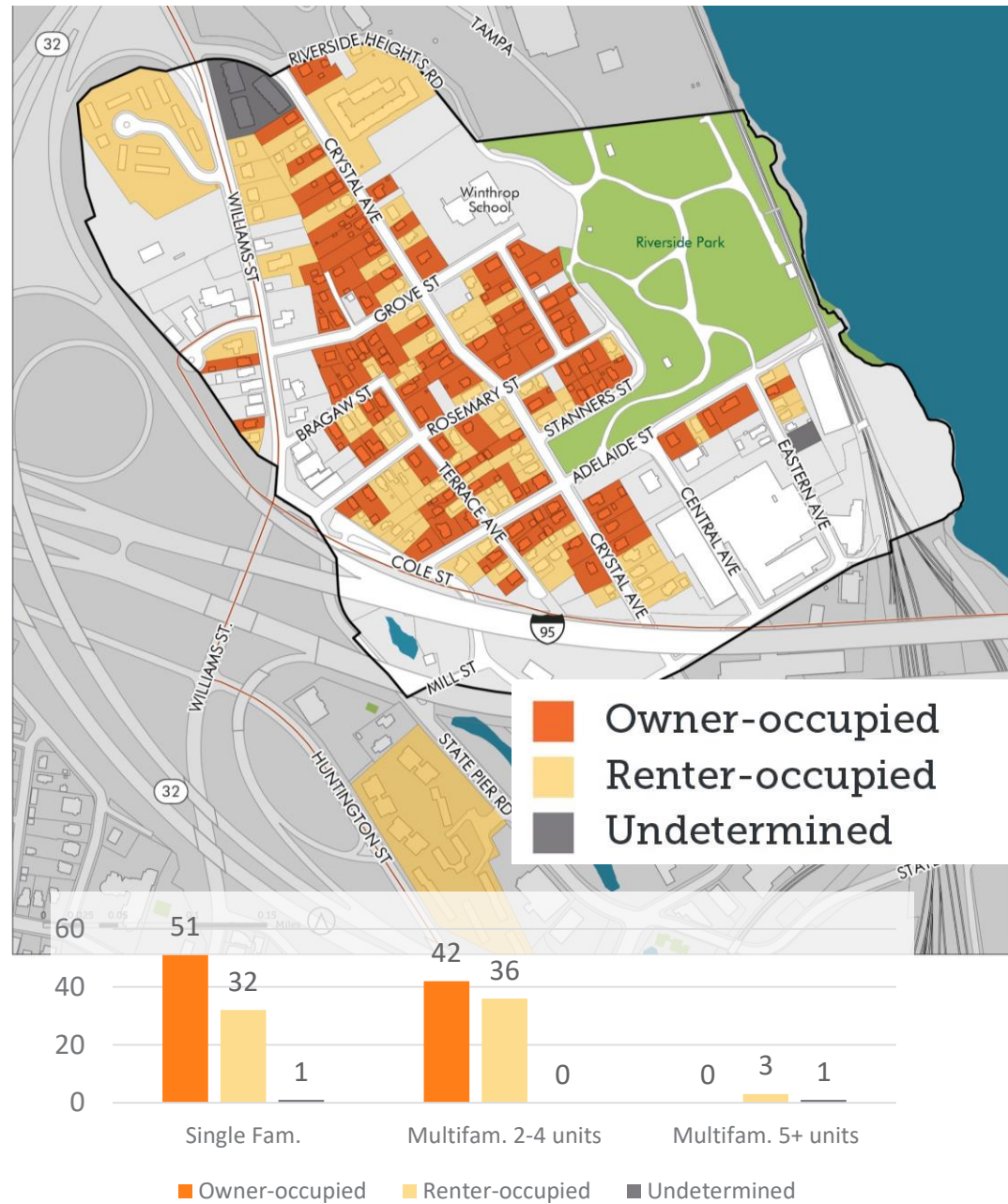
Source: ESRI.com

Property Ownership

About half of the 165 residential properties in Hodges Square are owner-occupied



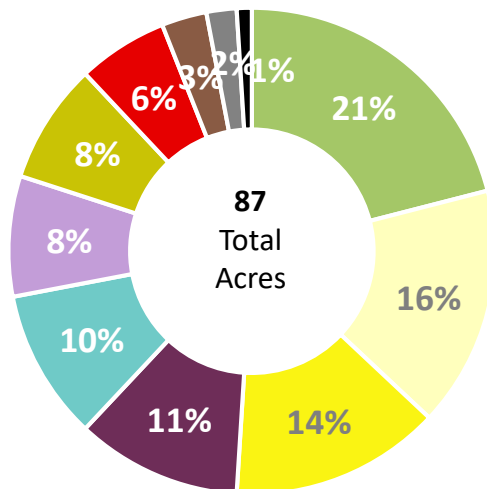
Source: City of New London, Interface Studio Field Survey (2019)



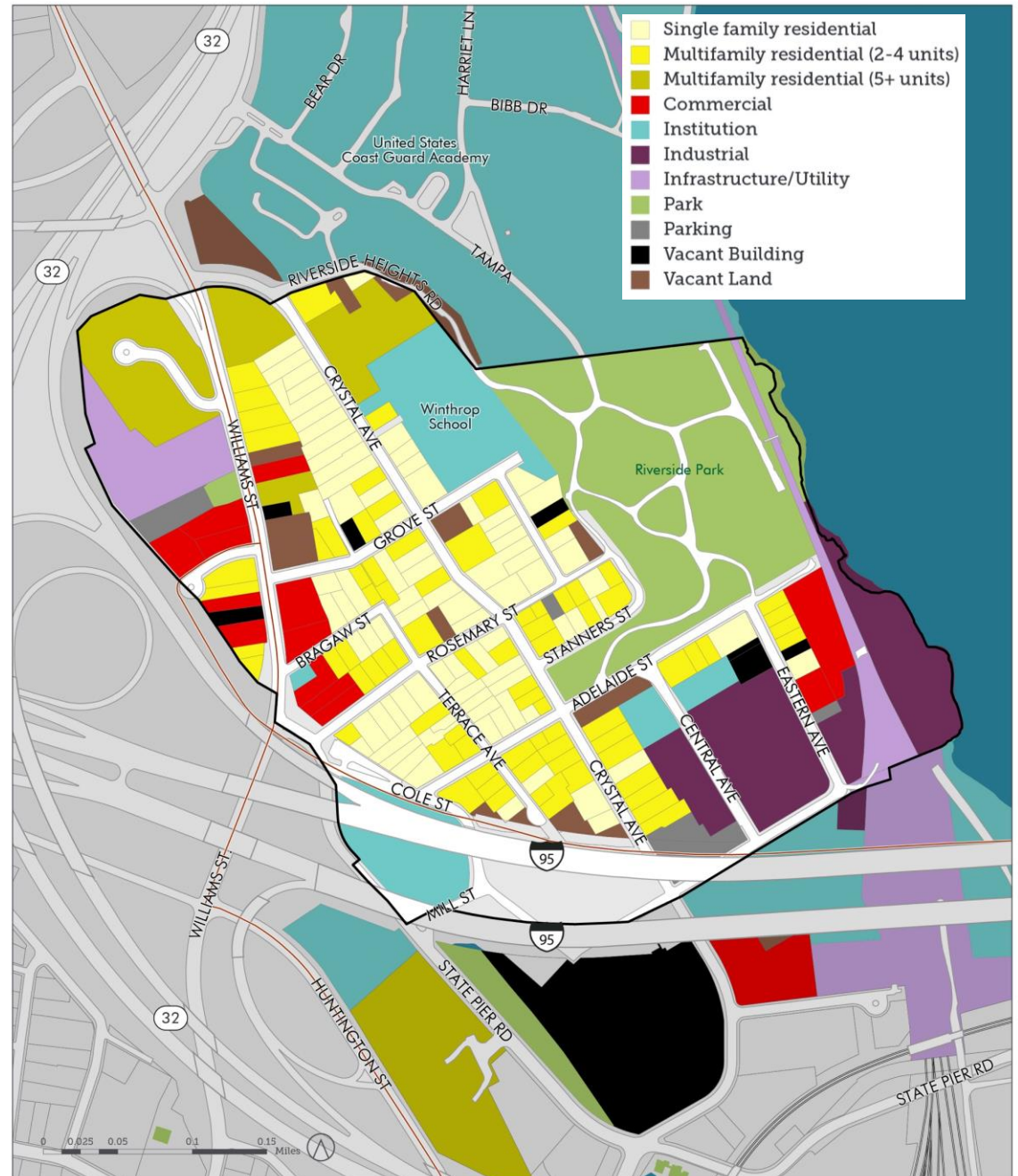
Land Use

Hodges Square

- Residential represents nearly 40% of the land use



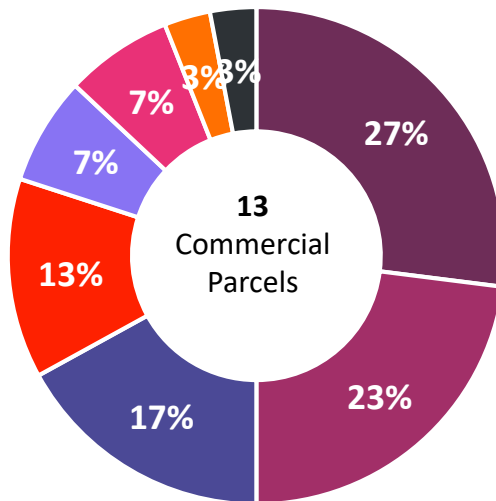
Source: City of New London, Interface Studio. (2019)



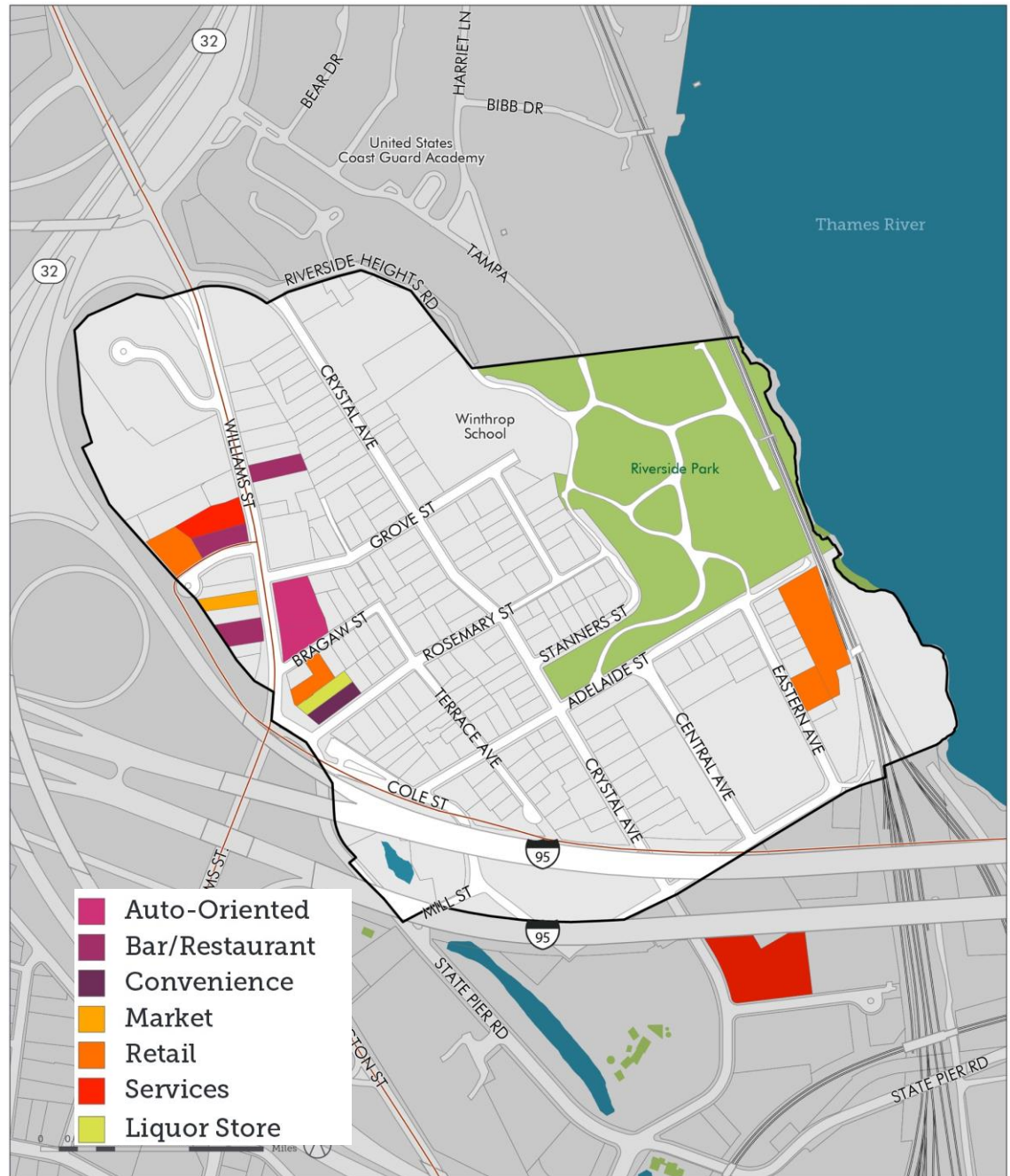
Commercial Uses

Hodges Square

- Convenience stores make up most commercial uses



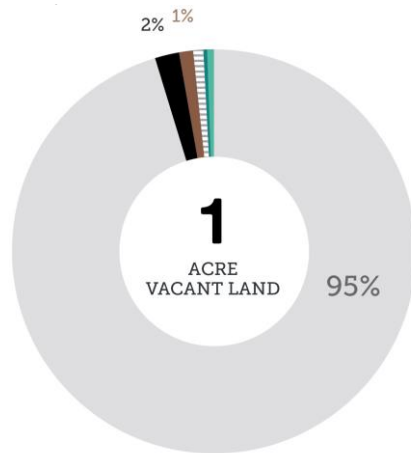
Source: City of New London, Interface Studio. (2019)



Vacancy

Hodges Square

- While vacancy is not a prevalent condition the locations where it does exist are in strategic

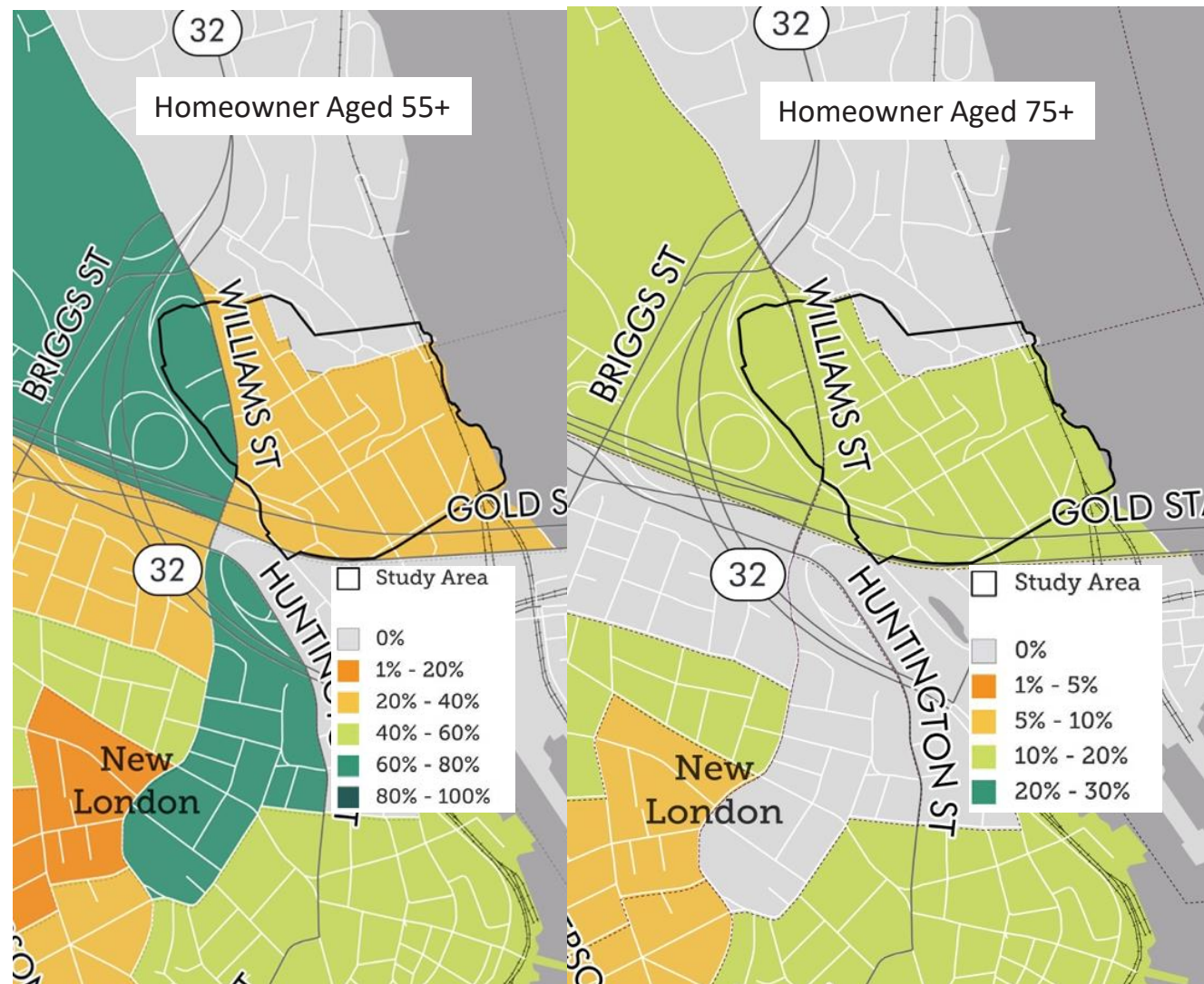


Source: City of New London, Interface Studio. (2019)



Hodges Square Neighborhood Susceptibility to Change

Based on age cohorts and life stage 30 to 60% of the neighborhood could be in flux over the next several years.



Source: ACS 2017 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

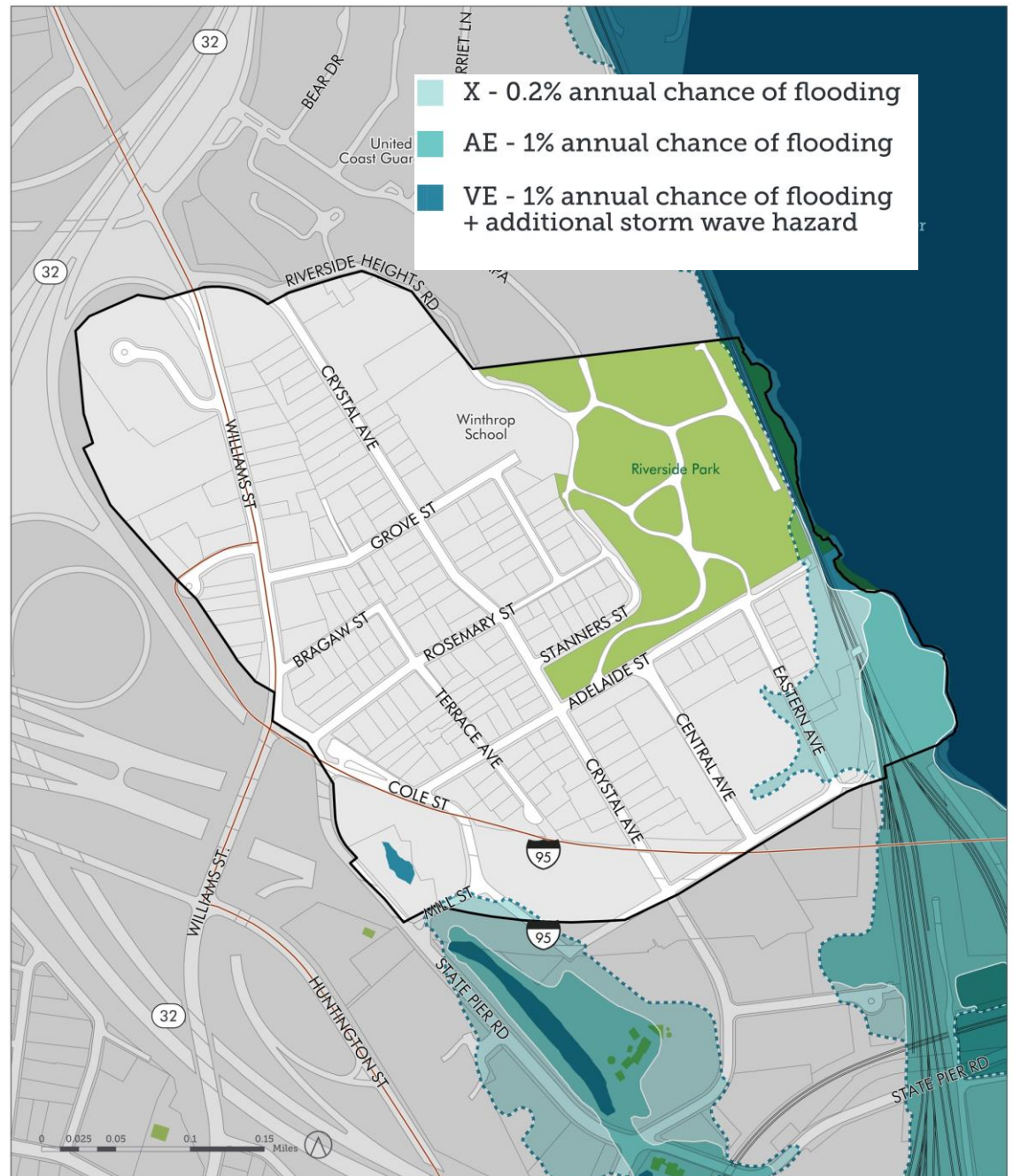
Environmental Factors Potentially Impacting Development

Flood Zones

Hodges Square

- Flood and storm surge should have minimal impact on Hodges Square

Source: 2017 FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer (NHFL)

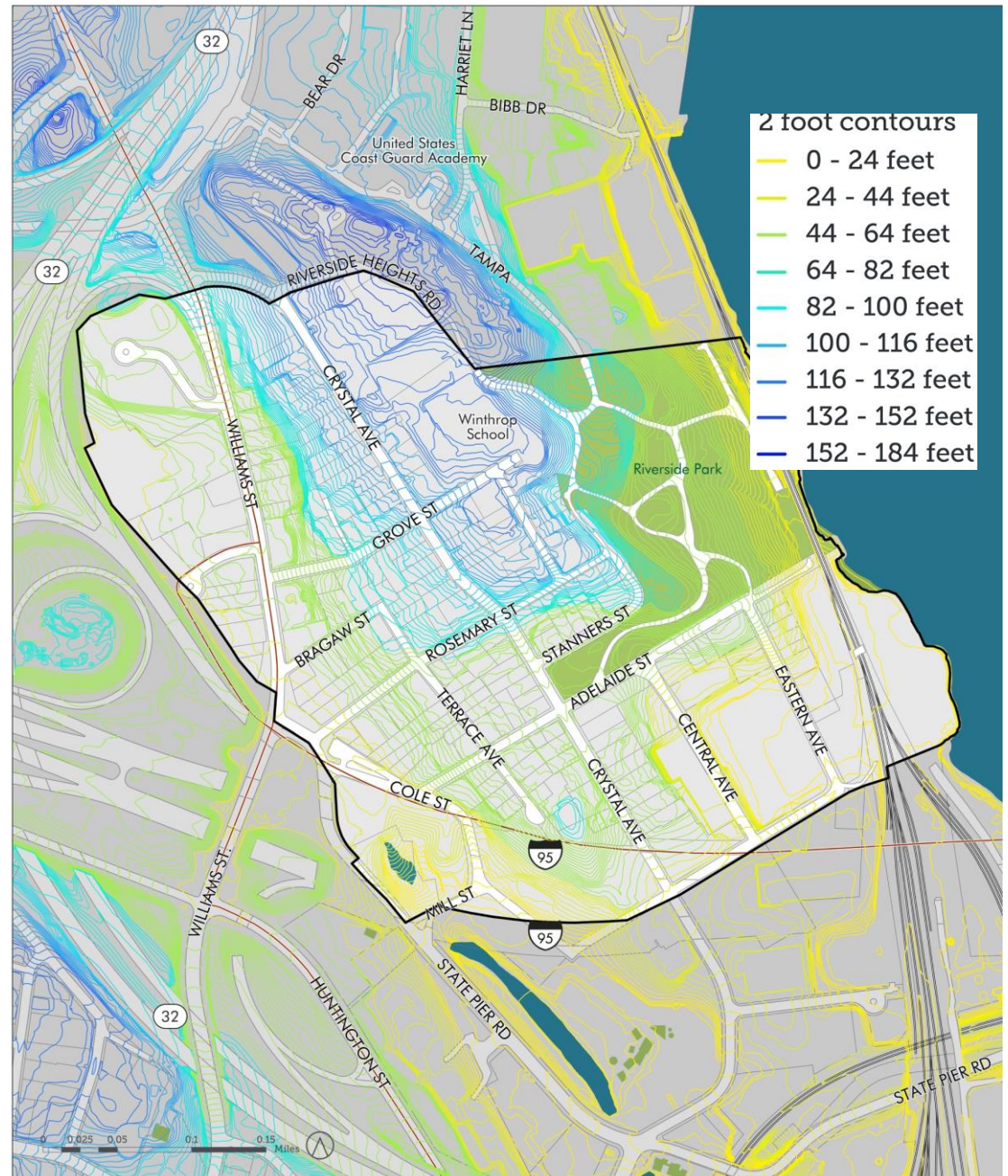


Topography

Hodges Square

- The topography of Hodges Square plays an important role in
 - Shaping a gateway to Riverside Park
 - Creating alternative pedestrian and bike options

Source: City of New London



Stakeholder Comments

Building Connections

Hodges Square Village Public Outreach Process

Additional Ideas:

Participants were able to provide additional feedback and suggestions for Hodges Square through the public workshop and the online survey. A total of 23 comments were collected and added to the list of ideas put forth in the recommendations.

Placemaking Ideas for Williams St:

- More signs to Riverside and large entrance sign into park
- Tree planters to allow banners to hang on them along Williams Street

Activation Ideas for the Old Mill & Hodges Square:

- For Olde Mill area - take down fence along State Pier Road (Mill St - Crystal Ave)
- Landscape for passive recreation along Winthrop core.
- In front of Hodges Square - Rug with checkers / chess design, large chess pieces, small table / chairs with chess boards for use / tournament.
- Outside small book library.
- Daylight brook - from Hodges square to Winthrop Core.
- A dog park / dog play area in Hodges Square or near (Stenger Farm not walkable and dog walkers are some of the people you actually see walking around Hodges Square).

Entrance Ideas for Riverside Park:

- Tot-lot next to the pavilion (current playground is for older kids).
- Horseshoe area next to pavilion.
- Weekly farmers' market with a variety of vendors - could also do flea market.
- I second the farmers' market!
- I love, love, love the idea of a farmers' market in the neighborhood. Especially SNAP accessible vendors / local farmers
- Pave Adelaide Street past Eastern Ave to lower entrance for access to river viewpoints.
- UConn or Coast Guard Academy Band could come to amphitheater space (plays, culture).
- Riverside Park footbridge to Thames Shore for renovation.

General Ideas:

- Community Center
- Anything that does not cost the taxpayers any more money
- Just a general beautification and pedestrian safety needed.
- More multicultural/heritage celebrations with lots of food vendors!
- Streetscape improvements. Curbs/sidewalks/ pavement/ fencing.
- With the close proximity to Connecticut College and CGA, Hodges Square should be a hub for college students filled with businesses that residents could also benefit from. Coffee shops, restaurants/bars, activities, etc.
- I am not sure how one would accomplish this, but one building sticks out from all the rest in Hodges Square, the Virginia Secor building. The current property owner has done nothing to improve the looks of this building let alone clean it up and correct the lettering on the building.
- Underpass recreation such as lighted basketball courts and public art and

Transportation Memo



Memo

To: Ninigret Partners From: Stantec
File: Hodges Square Transportation & Mobility Assessment Date: March 27, 2019

HODGES SQUARE IMPROVEMENTS

The following assessment gives a high-level peer review of the conceptual design plans which were developed for the Williams Street Traffic Control Improvement Upgrade in December 2017, as well as additional recommended improvements to the existing pedestrian and multimodal conditions around Hodges Square.

The goal of this review was to better connect communities to Hodges Square, in tandem with creating a more pedestrian and multimodal friendly Square. To revitalize Hodges Square, the team focused on assessing existing conditions and creating solutions to three key components: diverting truck traffic from the Square, enhancing the Williams Street streetscape, and connecting pedestrians and bicyclists from Groton to Hodges Square and Downtown New London. Key takeaways from each facet of the assessment include:

TRUCK TRAFFIC

Currently, trucks heading to the State Pier and warehouse zone near Riverside Park use Williams Street and State Pier Road via the I-95 off-ramp and the Route 32 Briggs Street exit. As seen in Figure 1, existing truck routes cut right through Hodges Square and the Old Town Mill, which can be a deterrence for bike, pedestrian, and car traffic as it impairs safety.

Wayfinding signage in key locations is an effective tool to remove truck traffic from Williams Street and Hodges Square and alleviate safety concerns. Figure 2 illustrates how new truck routes and signage could divert many trucks from Hodges Square, sending them along Route 32 and Crystal Avenue to access truck facilities near the State Pier. To guide trucks along these routes and use Crystal Avenue as a primary access corridor, signage locations should be placed on Route 32 pointing south (before the Briggs Street exit), before the Crystal Avenue and Route 32 intersection pointing left, and on I-95, pointing left (at southbound exit for 84S). For trucks coming from I-95 northbound, Exit 84E is the only option for local access, necessitating the use of Williams to State Pier Road. Overall, these strategies will reduce truck trips on Williams Street and State Pier Road, giving them an opportunity to become more walkable.

PEDESTRIAN AND MULTIMODAL CONNECTIVITY

There is an overall connectivity issue between Hodges Square, downtown New London, and across the river to Groton. Although the existing pedestrian walkway on the north side of the Gold Star bridge acts as a river crossing for non-vehicle traffic, it is too narrow to safely accommodate bicyclists, and there is limited signing, lighting, and paths connecting it to communities on either side of the bridge. The ongoing study of a crossing on the south side of the bridge is warranted, because it can provide a safer facility for both pedestrians and cyclists by taking the space of an excessive exit lane to Thames Street. Several precedents can be found on the top of Figure 3. This design is under separate review. However, any solution on the bridge requires those walking and biking between the local communities to divert significantly from a more direct and less elevated path across the river, which could instead be provided alongside the existing railroad bridge.

The cantilever pedestrian and bicycle paths on the bottom of Figure 3 set a precedent for the potential implementation of a cantilevered pedestrian bridge added to the south side of the railroad lift bridge. These and other precedents highlight that a protected and easily accessible walking and bicycling path can be installed on bridges similar to the existing rail bridge. While further structural analysis would be necessary, such a path would likely have significantly greater utility due to its height at grade with each community's shore and notably shorter travel distance to adjoining facilities.

Figure 4 gives an overview of existing and proposed pedestrian and bicycle connections around Hodges Square, including each river crossing option. As part of assessing the proposed Williams Street redesign, the missing bike linkage between Connecticut College and downtown through Hodges Square became evident. Williams, State Pier Road, and Water Street all have excess roadway capacity and/or width that could be repurposed as a dedicated biking route. By

creating a 2-way, 10' buffered cycle track along State Pier Road and Water Street (as seen in the cross-sections in Figure 4), foot and bike traffic are given the opportunity to easily and safely connect between these nearby places, as well as get to destinations like the Old Town Mill and area parks. The path would begin at Williams Street at State Pier Road and continue through Winthrop Cove Park, down Water Street to the ferry terminal, and eventually connect in Downtown New London to a separately proposed waterfront path. Adding 3' to the sidewalk along Water Street near Union Station acts as a traffic calming measure for vehicle and truck traffic, as well as encourages walking as a mode to access Downtown.

WILLIAMS STREET REDESIGN

Williams Street currently lacks the pedestrian and multimodal infrastructure necessary to create a walkable environment. Disconnected bicycle facilities, poorly located parking stalls, and limited pedestrian accommodations discourage connectivity and can deter surrounding neighbors from visiting the Square.

By implementing traffic calming measures and investing in foot and bike traffic infrastructure along Williams Street, Hodges Square has the potential to become a placemaking hub. As part of the scope, the transportation team reviewed the 2017 Williams Street Traffic Control Improvement Upgrade, providing edits and making improvements to the redesign plans. As seen in Figures 5-10, the team gave design feedback such as:

- Installing gateway islands for Hodges Square which also serve to calm traffic
- Adding curb extensions, crossing islands, and left-turn (linger) bike lanes;
- Properly aligning bike lanes;
- Continuing dashed lane bike markings through intersections;
- Drawing bicycle sharrows;
- Adding pedestrian yield markings and signs; and
- Improving crosswalks to adhere to NACTO guidelines

Figure 10 takes a deeper dive into improving walkability in the Hodges Square Shopping Center, by shifting angled parking, connecting the State Pier Road 2-way cycle track to Williams Street, and improving the gateway island and crosswalk designs.



Figure 1: Hodges Square Existing Truck Routes

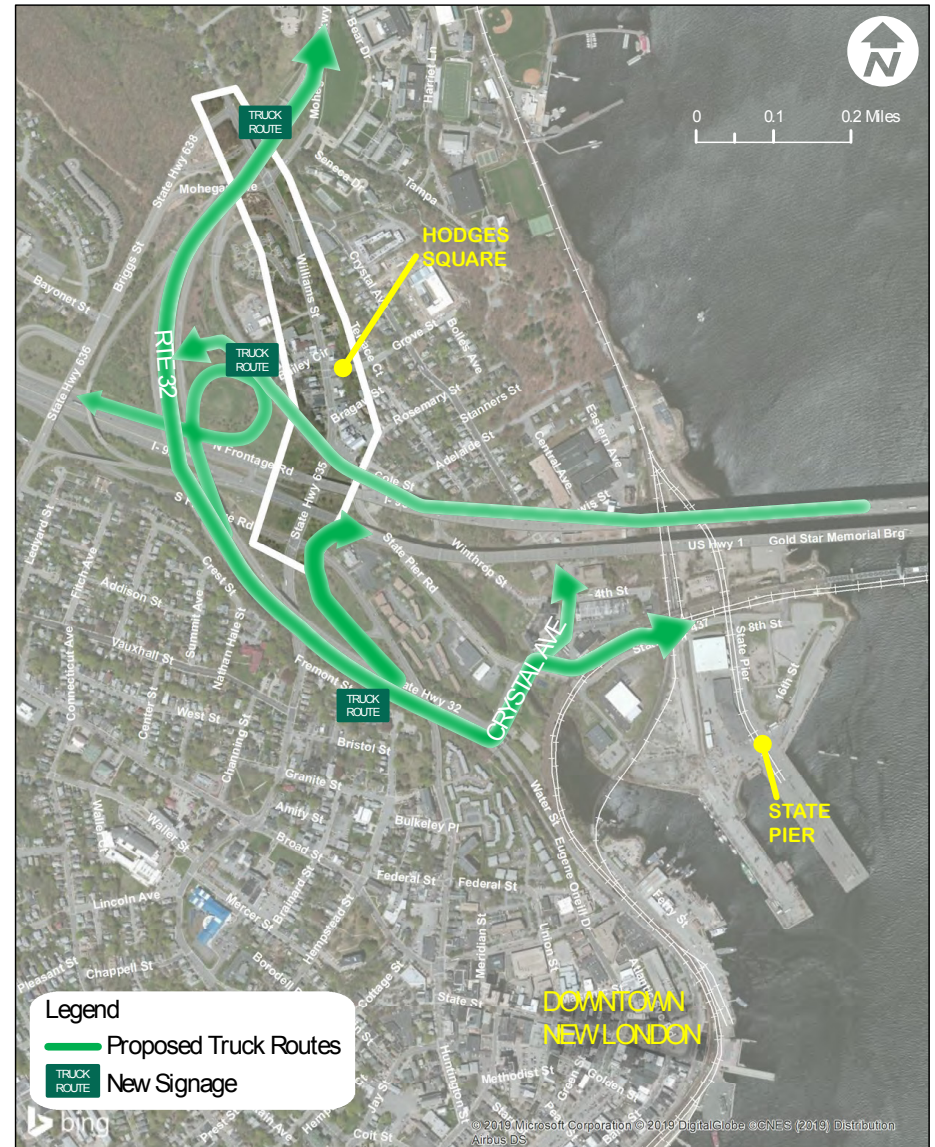


Figure 2: Hodges Square Proposed Truck Routes

Figure 3: Precedent Pedestrian & Bicycle Bridges

Highway Adjacent Pedestrian & Bicycle Bridges



Shore Parkway Bridge,
New York, NY



Kenneth Burns Memorial Bridge,
Worcester, MA



Woodrow Wilson Bridge Bikeway,
Fort Washington, MD

Cantilever Pedestrian & Bicycle Bridges



Tower Lift Bridge,
Sacramento, CA



Alexandra Bridge,
Ottawa, ON



Broadway Bridge,
Portland, OR

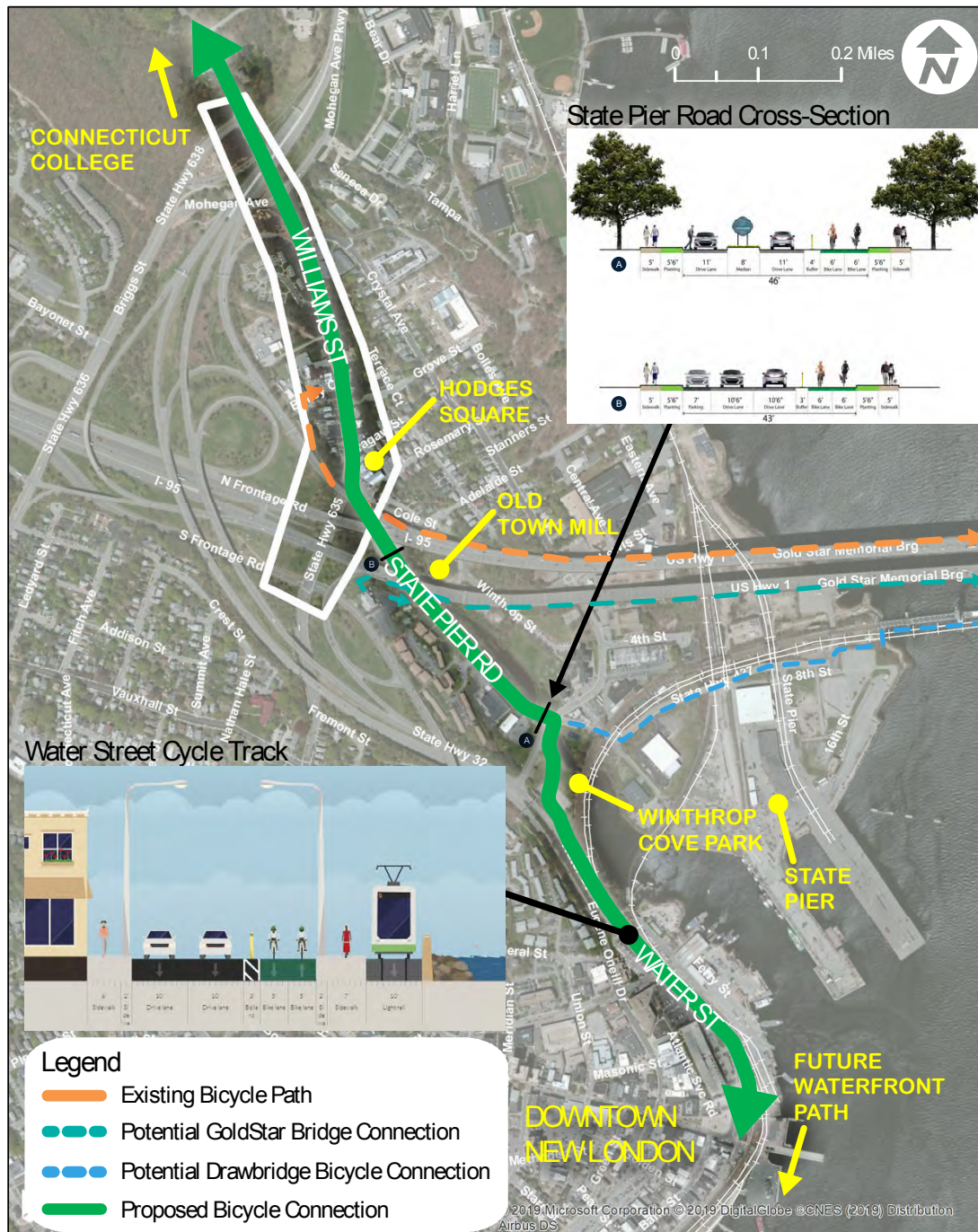
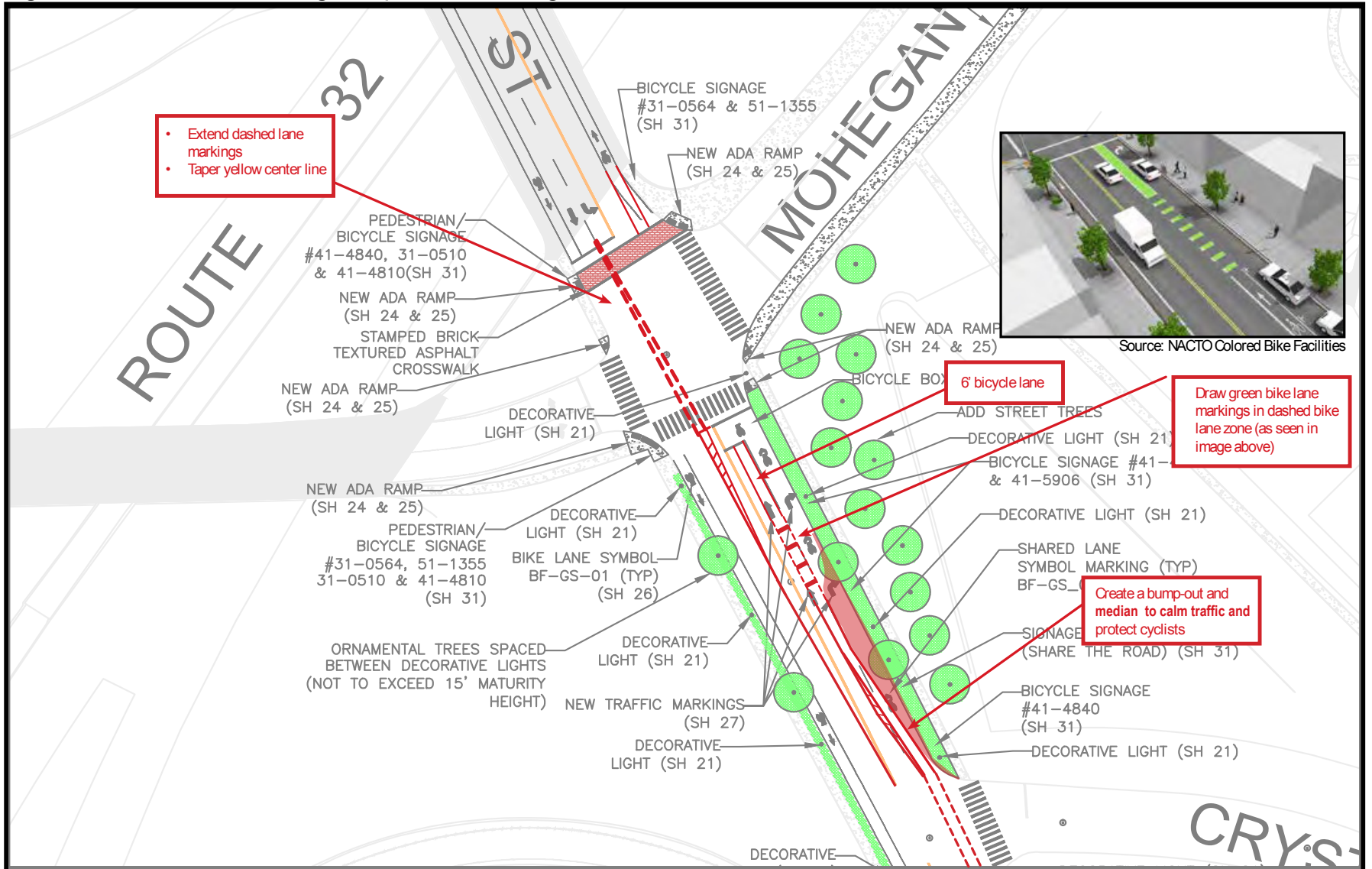


Figure 4: Hodges Square Existing Bicycle Path & Proposed Bicycle Connections

Figure 5: Williams Street/Hodges Square 2017 Design Comments



ORNAMENTAL TREES SPACED BETWEEN DECORATIVE LIGHTS (NOT TO EXCEED 15' MATURITY HEIGHT)

DECORATIVE LIGHT (SH 21)

NEW TRAFFIC MARKINGS (SH 27)

DECORATIVE LIGHT (SH 21)

DECORATIVE LIGHT (SH 21)

DECORATIVE LIGHT APPROX. 75' SPACING

DECORATIVE LIGHT (SH 21)

DECORATIVE LIGHT (SH 21)

DECORATIVE LIGHT APPROX 75' SPACING

DECORATIVE LIGHT (SH 21)

RELOCATE CATCH BASIN 2'

RELOCATE UTILITY POLE 2' 11665 (CL&P)

ORNAMENTAL TREE BETWEEN DECORATIVE LIGHTS (NOT TO EXCEED 15' MATURITY HEIGHT)

RELOCATE CATCH BASIN 2'

RELOCATE UTILITY POLE 2' 725 (FRONTIER)

RELOCATE CATCH BASIN 2'

STAMPED BRICK TEXTURED CONCRETE CROSSWALK

NEW ADA RAMP (SH 24 & 25)

PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE SIGNAGE (BICYCLE LANE BEGINS) #31-0564 & 51-1355 (SH 31)

DECORATIVE LIGHTS (14 PL) (SH 21)

RELOCATE UTILITY POLE 2'

BICYCLE LANE ENDS SIGNAGE # 31-0564 & 51-1356 (SH 31)

NEW ADA RAMP & SIDEWALK (SH 23-25)

SIGNAGE #41-5906 (SHARE THE ROAD) (SH 31)

BICYCLE SIGNAGE #41-4840 (SH 31)

DECORATIVE LIGHT (SH 21)

BICYCLE SIGNAGE (BIKE LANE ENDS) #31-0564 & 51-1356 (SH 31)

UTILITY POLE 11666 (HELTCO)

NEW BICYCLE LANES

DECORATIVE LIGHT (SH 21)

RELOCATE CATCH BASIN 2'

RELOCATE UTILITY POLE 2' 11665 (CL&P)

ORNAMENTAL TREE BETWEEN DECORATIVE LIGHTS (NOT TO EXCEED 15' MATURITY HEIGHT)

RELOCATE CATCH BASIN 2'

RELOCATE UTILITY POLE 2' 725 (FRONTIER)

RELOCATE CATCH BASIN 2'

STAMPED BRICK TEXTURED CONCRETE CROSSWALK

NEW ADA RAMP (SH 24 & 25)

PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE SIGNAGE (BICYCLE LANE BEGINS) #31-0564 & 51-1355 (SH 31)

DECORATIVE LIGHTS (14 PL) (SH 21)

RELOCATE UTILITY POLE 2'

CRYSTAL AVE

RIVERSIDE AVE

GORDON CT

Create gateway island

Cross-section redesign:

- 6' Bicycle lane
- 10-11' Travel lane
- 4' Median
- 10-11' Travel lane
- 6' Bicycle lane

Figure 7: Williams Street/Hodges Square 2017 Design Comments

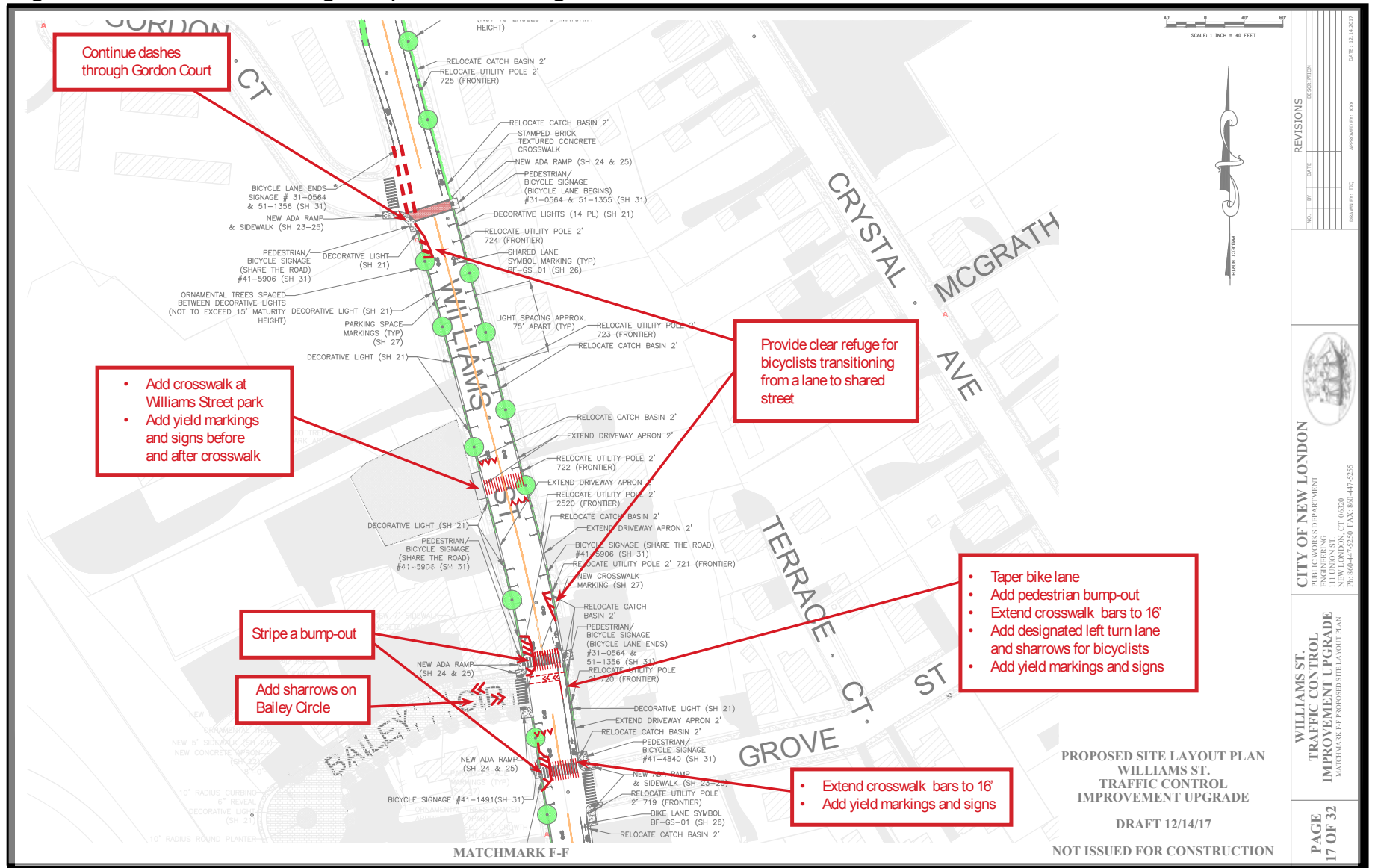


Figure 8: Williams Street/Hodges Square 2017 Design Comments

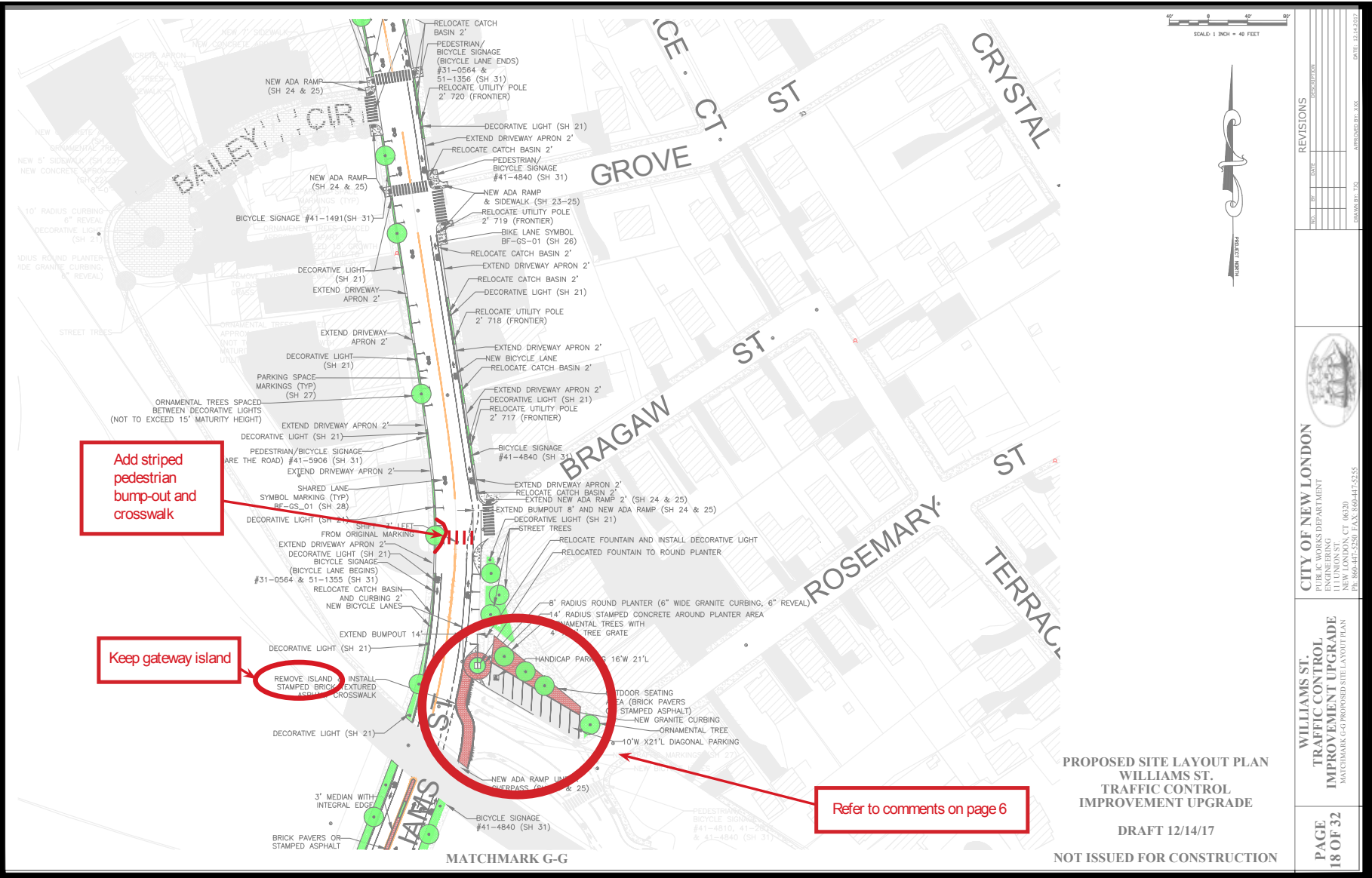


Figure 9: Williams Street/Hodges Square 2017 Design Comments

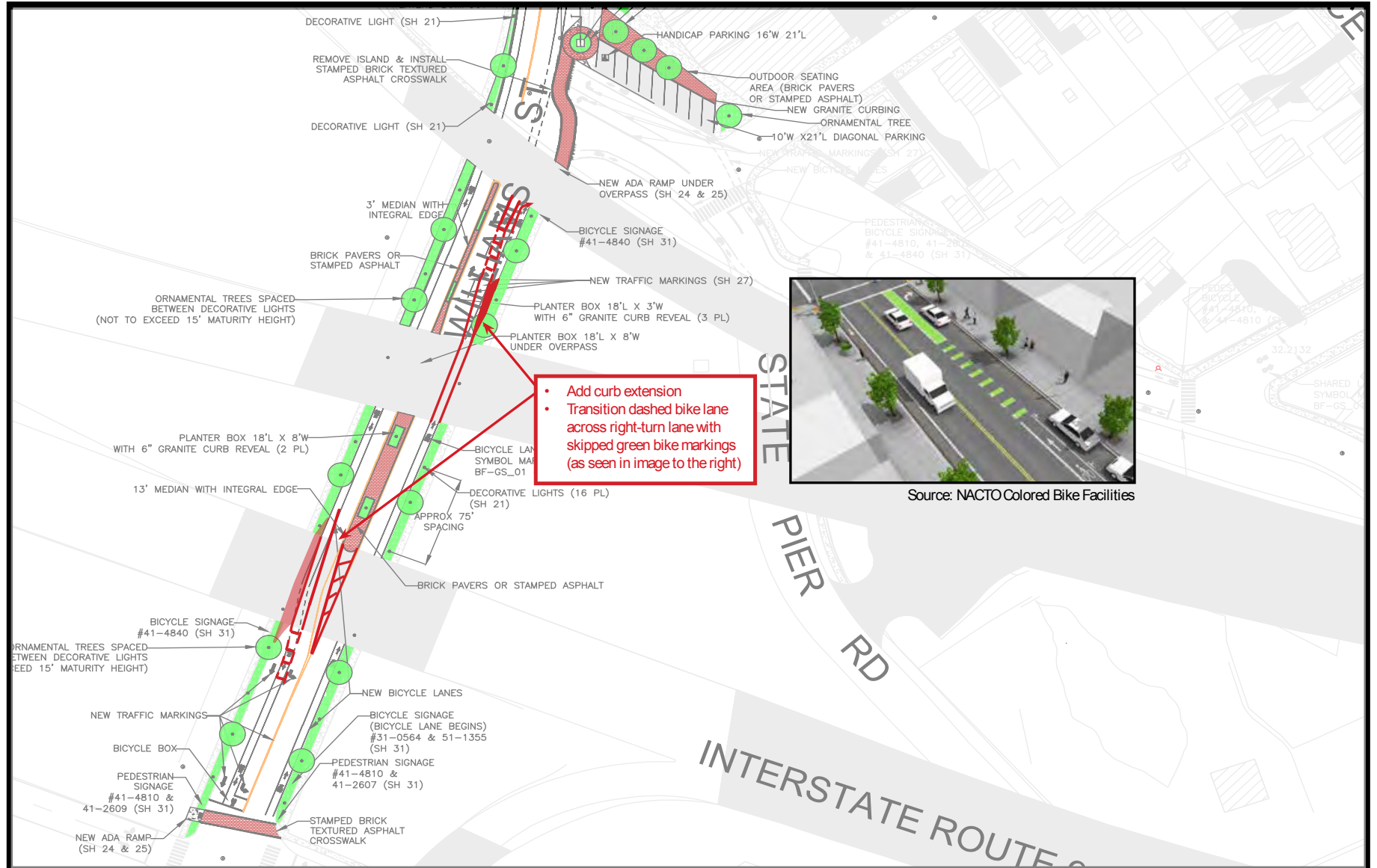


Figure 10: Williams Street/Hodges Square 2017 Design Comments

